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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Peace Talks Said To Raise Economic Prospects

92AE0250B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
8 Feb 92 p 11

[Article by Mahmud 'Abd-al-'Azim, in Cairo: "Will Arab-Israeli Economic Cooperation Be Achieved During Peacetime"]

[Text] Israel has played the card of Arab-Israeli economic cooperation with Arab negotiators at the bilateral talks as a pivotal and pressing precondition to concluding a peaceful resolution of Middle East regional problems. According to statements by Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, the Israeli negotiator is calling for economic normalization as an essential prerequisite to political normalization.

This condition comes just as the Arab Boycott Office in Damascus prepares to announce the list of corporations, nations, and individuals having dealings with Israel, in order to ban them from the Arab market and place their products on the blacklist of items not to be traded.

In view of the avowed desire of all parties to achieve a just and lasting peace in the Middle East and the determination of the international parties sponsoring the peace conference, especially the United States, can this difficult economic interchange be realized? Will Arab markets open their doors to Israeli goods? Can market mechanisms be organized between Israel and the Arab countries? What are the benefits to be realized by the parties to such an interchange, and what are the losses they will incur?

AL-HAYAH put these questions to a number of Arab economic and political observers.

Dr. Ahmad al-Ghandur, professor of political economics and dean of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University, stressed that Israel has sought economic normalization with all Arab countries ever since it was first implanted in the Arab region, because it wants to pursue its economic livelihood by relying on local and internal elements, rather than being externally dependent forever, especially on the United States and countries of Western Europe. Beginning in the seventies, with the oil boom in the Arabian Gulf and economic and developmental revival in Arab countries, Israel tried every avenue to build bridges of economic cooperation with the Arab countries. Israel attempted to evade the boycott declared by all Arab countries and organized through the Boycott Office in Damascus by exporting goods to some Arab states using the names of certain Western companies and ports in these countries as transit points for its goods. French corporations continued to be involved in this type of suspect activity and attempted to secretly conclude some deals with certain Arab companies. Dr. al-Ghandur added that the peace conference now gives Israel a golden opportunity, and it will not let the chance get away. Hence, it is insisting on the condition of economic normalization with the Arab countries, because normalization would bring enormous economic benefits to Israel. Arab markets annually consume about \$90 billion worth of goods, most

of which comes from the countries of Western Europe, the United States, some countries of Southeast Asia, and Japan. Israel produces 60 percent of these goods, especially electrical and electronic goods, clothing, and medical instruments. Israel also covets Arab water as a firm, strategic objective that will never change. Its need for Arab water grew with the influx of nearly 1 million Soviet immigrants last year. Given some form of economic normalization, Israel could realize part of its dreams of Arab water through joint ventures. Dr. al-Ghandur pointed out that Israel also wants Arab oil and natural gas. If peace is achieved in the region, natural relations of regional cooperation and neighborliness will be established with the Arab states bordering Israel, and Israel will covet cheap Arab manpower to continue its economic production machine, especially on the large farms and in the factories it is now establishing. In so doing, it will basically be dependent on Jordanian and Palestinian manpower.

But what can Israel give the Arab states in return for what it gains under economic normalization?

Dr. Maurice Makramallah, Egypt's minister of international cooperation, says that the only economic possibility Israel has that is superior to most of the Arab countries is technology, but it is doubtful whether Israel can offer this to the Arab countries, because its technological superiority gives it the element of power to control the region, which it will naturally want to protect. As a result, any mutuality of interests between it and the Arab countries is lost. This makes it hard to assert that there can be economic cooperation between Israel and the Arab countries.

Dr. Makramallah stresses that, since the signing of the Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel, no commercial exchange protocol between the two has been signed in the last 12 years; Israeli company presence in Egypt is rare; and no Egyptian company has considered opening a branch in Israel. Economic cooperation between the two countries has been restricted to limited trading deals between the two governments, taking the form of commodity exchanges and a limited amount of tourism activity.

Mr. Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, member of the Palestine Liberation Organization Central Committee, director of the Palestine Census Bureau, and member of the Boycott Office in Damascus, feels that the term "economic normalization" is simply a terminological cover for an overt Israeli plan aimed at obtaining Arab water, oil, gas, and market resources in exchange for nothing. Moreover, such normalization will ensure that Israel achieves a goal that it has so far failed to win, namely an end to the Palestinian intifadah and a halt to the daily bleeding of Israeli economic losses.

Mr. al-Nashashibi points to the 1991 Arab Economic Council report, reviewed by the Social and Economic Council of the Arab League during its recent session in Cairo, and says that the damages to the Israeli economy monitored by the report are causing Israel to explore every means to halt the intifadah. In the labor arena, Israel lost \$3 billion as Palestinian labor in its establishments dried

up, while in the commercial exchange arena, the drop in West Bank imports from Israel is estimated at about \$527 million. Israeli revenue from the occupied territories in the form of fees, taxes, and customs has dropped about \$300 million. al-Nashashibi dismisses the possibility of there being economic cooperation in the usual sense between the Arabs and Israel. Rather, there is more likely to be an Israeli "economic fleecing" of the Arab region, in the context of trade agreements and protocols under which Israel would achieve what it failed to gain through peace.

Hedi Baccouche Discusses UMA Issues

92AF0533A Casablanca AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI
in Arabic 25 Feb 92 p 2

[Interview with former Prime Minister Hedi Baccouche by Mustafa al-'Iraqi and Mahmud Ma'ruf; place and date not given]

[Text] In addition to his role in the 7 November 1987 action, [in which General Zine el Abidine Ben Ali was installed as president], Hedi Baccouche, a former Tunisian prime minister, played an important role in paving the way for the establishment of the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA], touring extensively throughout the Maghreb since the 7 November Action. Although he has lived outside of the limelight since leaving the premiership, one can nonetheless attach importance to the following interview with him regarding Arab Maghreb issues on the anniversary of the UMA's establishment.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] What does the third anniversary of the establishment of the UMA indicate to you?

[Hedi Baccouche] It certainly compels us to evaluate the steps that we have taken. The declaration of the union was the expression of consummate efforts made for a number of years to establish the UMA. If we compare our current situation with our situation before the union was declared, we find that we have made important steps, such as the structuring of the union, the programs of the meetings, and the agreements which have been concluded. We must not dismiss regional incidents and internal problems, and their effect on the unification process. Nonetheless, I am optimistic, because all the statements made by officials stress the need to continue unification efforts.

The Arab Maghreb, as I understand it, means that I, as a Tunisian citizen, can travel to Morocco and Algeria without a passport and without having to convert currency at the central bank. It means that goods can move unimpeded, and making jointly-formulated plans for our relations with other countries.

The gap between the Arab Maghreb countries began to narrow in response to developments in Europe. The Maghreb countries can cope with these developments only through concrete bilateral or collective measures. The surrounding external circumstances have necessarily been an impetus for joint Maghrebi action.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The move toward a unified Europe was an especially important impetus for

Maghreb action and the establishment of the UMA. However, Maghreb enthusiasm has flagged, while European steps toward unity are quickening!

[Hedi Baccouche] The motives of the Arab Maghreb are more internal and Maghrebi than European. I am of the generation for which the Arab Maghreb was a settled matter and a goal that had to be achieved, not debated. A rereading of the 7 November statement indicates that it [the UMA's establishment] was more from Maghrebi [factors] than anything else.

There are economic motives for the UMA. However, the basic motives are historical and cultural. Some aspects of European unification are positive in their effects. European unification is a stimulant, an incentive, a reminder, an event which—together with the Europeans' joint action against Maghreb emigre communities, which is corroborated by European attitudes—arouses in us an inferiority complex that motivates us to move more quickly. A unified Europe will no doubt require larger, versus smaller, units [with respect to trade]. Europe has an interest in dealing with a single market comprising 100 million persons, rather than small, dispersed markets. This is especially true, given that one goal of European unification is to compete with Japan and the United States. Europe needs the Maghreb in this competition.

This does not mean that a unified Europe does not have negative implications for the Arab Maghreb's future. However, we can mitigate the effect of these negative aspects via our joint action.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] What is the Arab Maghreb's influence in what is now known as the new international order?

[Hedi Baccouche] Its influence relates to my previous comment. European-American-Japanese competition will be manifested throughout the world, including the Arab Maghreb. If that is negative, it is because we are in an inferior position. The new international climate must push us as strugglers to develop a unified economic policy and a strategic foreign policy, so that we can plow ahead on an independent course, without being subordinate to this order.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Are there internal problems that should be solved in the Arab Maghreb framework?

[Hedi Baccouche] First, the problems of each Maghreb country must be solved internally. Integral harmony must exist in each Maghreb country in order for them to be unified. Intense internal problems in any country preclude that country from giving priority to building unity in its programs.

There are several problems that Maghreb cooperation can solve, such as the problem of the fundamentalists, because we are all Muslims, and Islam is a source of strength now, as it was during opposition to colonialism. All interpretations of Islam that have led to confrontations originated outside the region. Therefore, we can cooperate within an ideological, political framework to deal with this problem.

The problem of the [Western] Sahara can also be solved through Maghreb cooperation. We have tried to do this in the past. However, this will not come to pass unless the building of the greater Maghreb progresses. The more it progresses, the easier it will be to solve this problem. The statements of [UMA] President Mohamed Boudiaf give us great hope in this regard.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] The parties and key figures of civilian Maghreb society are still outside of the framework of Maghreb action!

[Hedi Baccouche] I believe that democracy is the basis of progress, not only in the Arab Maghreb, but also in all Arab societies.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Did Tunisia experience dynamism, particularly in the dialogue with the opposition parties before the developments in Algeria?

[Hedi Baccouche] The dynamism which Tunisia has experienced preceded the Algerian developments. I do not believe that these developments are the motive.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Hedi Baccouche was considered the focal point of the 7 November action. How do you view Tunisia four and a half years after that action?

[Hedi Baccouche] I do not wish to speak about Tunisia outside of Tunisia.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Where are you now?

[Hedi Baccouche] A Tunisian struggler.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] In the Constitutional Democratic Rally Party [RCD]?

[Hedi Baccouche] In general, yes, because, as far as I am concerned, politics is morals and values, not just the pursuit of power. I maintain that an individual can participate in only one revolution. Hedi Baccouche carried out his revolution in the RCD. Denial does not help, nor is it consistent with values.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] How do you view the Maghreb role in the Palestinian cause?

[Hedi Baccouche] The problems of the Arab East are complicated and many. As Maghrebis, our best course is to support the choices made by the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization]. The situation of Palestinians and of the Palestinian resistance is very difficult. We would exacerbate the difficulties of this situation if we tried to give directives and impose ideas on them. That would not be beneficial. As Maghrebis, we must recognize that the only the Palestinians have the right to determine their policy and tactics. We must help them politically, materially, and informationally, and we should support the leadership chosen by the Palestinians.

[AL-ITTIHAD AL-ISHTIRAKI] Where will the tension in Libyan-Western relations lead?

[Hedi Baccouche] The situation is damaging us greatly as Maghrebis. We know that the leveling of an accusation, courts, and investigation are fundamentals. My knowledge

of the problem is based on what I read in the newspapers. There is some secret here, and it is the source of our dissatisfaction.

And Islamism—we have known regimes whose intentions were good. They desired only good for the people and promised them paradise. We do not assert that they lied. However, the reality that we have experienced is that we have endured the pressure of power without achieving progress, because democracy works on the basis of the people fulfilling its role in guiding the ruler, regardless of his intentions. However, after long experience, it is said "they are led to paradise in chains." This applies to our societies. Either one advances entirely of his own accord and participates with conviction in the building process, or matters turn topsy-turvy. What applies to society also applies to the building of unity. Local democracy is the basis of Maghreb democracy.

Al-Hakim Visit to Saudi Arabia Analyzed

92AE0266A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 3, 4 Mar 92

[Article by Muhammad Jabir al-Ansari: "Indicators Go Beyond Limits of Iraqi Opposition"]

[3 Mar p 13]

[Text] How well Saudi Arabia did by receiving Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and how well al-Hakim did—he and his colleagues in the council leadership—by deciding to come to Riyadh and meet with senior Saudi leaders, thereby overcoming considerations and obstacles of various past periods. How well the Islamic Republic of Iran—which hosts and subsidizes the council—did, with its understanding of the need to make this visit. This visit could be considered "historic" from several aspects, not just from the aspect of Iraqi opposition movements alone. In addition, there is the aspect of long-term relations between the Islamic sects; and the aspect of a Saudi-Iranian accord which, in our estimation, will continue to be a most important strategic requirement to guarantee security and stability in the Gulf region, no matter what other international and regional arrangements are made over the near term, especially after the catastrophe that Iraq inflicted on itself and on the region.

We shall first begin with a look at the visit's direct political dimension pertaining to current Iraqi opposition movements, in order to free themselves from the crisis of searching for "the suitable alternative" to the Iraqi regime—a regionally and internationally acceptable alternative, in a relatively balanced fashion, among the parties concerned. The absence of this alternative on the eve of Kuwait's liberation was one of the most important reasons—in all probability—that expedited the end of the war, allowing the Iraqi regime time to collect itself in Baghdad after the "storm." If it is successful, this visit by the head of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution—of all people—to Saudi Arabia—of all places—might represent the first indication of a possible departure by the divided Iraqi opposition—divided geographically,

doctrinally, nationally, and ethnically—from these divisional melting pots which have hindered them for a long time, with clear assistance from the Iraqi regime itself. The opposition is trying to find a comprehensive Iraqi national political plan, to which the people of Iraq—Arabs and Kurds—could be committed, in such a way as to raise the possibility of changing the regime without harming the entity. This is the concept that is still fixed in the minds of all those who are concerned with not opening the way for collapses in the region's nations, at a time when the largest and greatest entities in the world have collapsed—for example, the Soviet Union.

If an initial accord among the political figures in the Iraqi opposition is generated from Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim's visit, then that will represent an important step toward complete accord between Arab and Kurdish figures in this opposition, because—in principle—numerous features of a general framework exist for a comprehensive, national political plan, for which the Iraqi opposition now searches; or rather, for which Iraq has been searching since the regime's sectarian policies appeared in the early eighties, under the auspices of the long war with Iran, with all its domestic complications and consequences.

This, then, is the direct political dimension of the visit. Its importance is limited to the Iraqi political scene and its regional relationships.

However, in this visit we see another important dimension—the most comprehensive—for which Arabs and Muslims have been searching in recent decades. This concerns relationships of dialogue and accord among them, especially among their sects and schools of religious thought, all of which spring from and are derived from Islam and its divine principles. Under its comprehensive umbrella, it shelters and is compassionate to all.

Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, a Shi'ite religious man with a prominent religious and political background and status, comes to Saudi Arabia, the site of the two holy mosques and stronghold of the Sunni people and community, and is received at the highest levels. This is seen, in itself, as a positive, encouraging sign that merits the support of all Muslims, whatever persuasion they may be, in order to return to that true and fertile Islamic dialogue that began among the Islamic creeds, especially between the two major Islamic sects, Sunni and Shi'ite, in the mid-20th century in Egypt. This dialogue was under the auspices of al-Azhar, with the participation of ulema representing those various sects within the context of a committee to "Reconcile Islamic Beliefs." This committee made some progress before it was suspended because of political circumstances. Its most prominent accomplishment was the famous religious ruling [fatwa], issued by the shaykh of al-Azhar mosque at that time (1959), the late Shaykh Mahmud Shaltut, concerning the equality of the Imami sect with the other Islamic sects in understanding, evaluation, and teaching. One of the consequences of this was the liberalization [infatih] of Islamic jurisprudence [fiqh] in comparative Islamic studies achieved by al-Azhar at that time.

If we are not anticipating immediate results from al-Hakim's visit on this same level—in view of the direct political nature of the visit—we do think that his visit over the mid- and long run will take root, just as that dialogue and the expected liberalization did among all Islamic parties. Perhaps it is worth mentioning that a private meeting was arranged between Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim and Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Jubayr, the Saudi minister of justice, who is considered a religious scholar and a religious personage in Saudi Arabia, by virtue of his position and the kingdom's application of Islamic law [shari'ah] in all judicial matters. After this meeting, al-Hakim stated that the conversation centered around ways to avoid exploiting others because of disputes among Muslims. This is a reference that proves that the opening of a positive dialogue among Islamic sects was likely in the thinking of these two men, because the opening of such a dialogue is one way to guarantee avoiding those disputes. In addition, they touched on the creation of an Islamic court of justice.

In light of Israeli and other international plots to divide the Arab and Islamic world into internecine sectarian entities, as is clear, it is incumbent upon Arabs and Muslims to have such meetings. These responsible and balanced dialogues are based on mutual respect, since each Islamic party defends his interpretation and, at the same time, understands the interpretation of his brother Muslims of other sects.

Whenever the new direction in Islamic-Islamic relations is attained—and progress is hoped for—it will represent an effective and successful counter to the tendency toward divisiveness, factionalism, and futile conflict among the Islamic sects and schools of thought, which has emerged in recent decades because of misconceptions among the Islamic parties and exploitation of those misconceptions by anti-Islamic forces, particularly in light of the futile Iran-Iraq War that dragged on for eight years. Other Islamic sects, which basically do not want this doctrinal erosion, were also dragged along with it. If Muslims can accept Islamic-Christian dialogue with the Vatican and other Christian bodies, why should they continue to fall behind on Islamic-Islamic dialogue among themselves? When will they accept this, in this age of international changes and rapid world interaction among various ideas, creeds, and cultures?

Moreover, we must be even more candid with each other. If the Arabs and Israelis can sit together today at bilateral and multilateral negotiation tables, is it not permissible for Muslims to sit with each other in a mutual dialogue? Failure to do that defies all logic and represents a negative judgement on all Muslims, without exception.

Accordingly, in our view, the historic importance of the Riyadh meetings is from this perspective. Saudi Arabia has expertise and experience in arranging rapprochement dialogues among Arabs and Muslims in many fields and on to many issues, by virtue of its leanings toward mutual accord and reconciliation among various parties. This, in turn, leads to harmony and cooperation, instead of confrontation and ruin, whether in politics or religion.

This has been Saudi Arabia's policy since its founding. King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz is perhaps one of the most prominent leaders in the kingdom's history of leaders characterized by this spirit and this conciliatory policy, as all those familiar with King Fahd's political thinking can attest, and as his policies and positions themselves confirm. If the king and the kingdom could succeed in holding the al-Ta'if Conference with the various Lebanese factions, which led to a new era in Lebanon, then it is not unlikely that the king and the kingdom will succeed in holding a similar conference, preparatory to extracting Iraq from the present crisis, along with protecting the Iraqi entity as an Arab, Muslim country. Perhaps the present Riyadh meetings represent a preparation for a major political conference under the auspices of Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Iran, with the participation of various Iraqi factions and personalities, so that Iraq may have the same opportunity that Lebanon has had to return to an era of stability, peace, and reconstruction.

The political indicators that surround the visit to Riyadh by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim and his delegation suggest that a serious political initiative is about to begin in this direction. Al-Hakim was received by King Fahd, Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and Prince Sultan Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the second deputy prime minister. When the three senior political figures in the kingdom receive an unofficial political figure, paying him this degree of importance, it means that Riyadh wants to send a definite message to all concerned with this affair.

Perhaps we can read some indications of this message between the lines of the communique distributed by the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq after al-Hakim's visit to Saudi Arabia. It stated that "King Fahd welcomed Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim to his second country—Saudi Arabia. He expressed his hope that he would meet him again in our second country—Iraq—in the near future." This was a reference to the expected political role of al-Hakim and his bloc in Iraq's political future. For his part, al-Hakim stressed the need to "maintain the existing composition of the Iraqi people, without exception, and without violating any of them." This was a reference to mutual recognition of the different sects without exposing any sect to danger in the event of a change in regime. This is a question that undoubtedly enters into the essence of Saudi concerns.

It was noted that a "closed meeting" was held between King Fahd and al-Hakim after the full session attended by Iraqi leaders of various persuasions. It suffices to say that al-Hakim was accompanied by Iraqi personages on his visit to Saudi Arabia, which he concluded by stating: "We have agreed on all ideas, and the visit achieved its basic goals."

If these indicators reflect progress toward developing an integrated Iraqi national plan, in our estimation, it also went beyond the Iraqi arena to a broader Gulf arena. We shall deal with this analysis in a subsequent article.

[Article by Muhammad Jabir al-Ansari: "Toward New Horizons for Arab-Iranian Relations"]

[4 Mar p 13]

[Text] If the visit to Saudi Arabia by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, head of the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, represents a turning point in the Iraqi opposition's movement toward an integrated Iraqi national plan, and if—from another perspective—it indicates the possibility of opening a true dialogue among Islamic sects, as we made clear in the first article, then from a third perspective, it tacitly suggests a new strategic direction in the Gulf region, which could have a most profound influence on its future.

This visit was not likely to achieve this progress, or rather, it was not likely to even occur, unless there was Iranian approval and tacit Iranian understanding of its intentions, since Iran hosts and supports the Supreme Council.

Third Dimension

This leads us to the third distinctive dimension of this visit, which is the possible horizons of Saudi-Iranian political and strategic understanding on the Gulf region, in its broad geopolitical concept.

Saudi Arabia and Iran are the two major countries occupying opposite coasts along the Gulf, with all its other nations. In addition, there is the size, material resources, and political and spiritual status of each in the Islamic world.

This geographic and human proximity between Saudi Arabia and Iran in the Gulf is one of the facts of life that we cannot forget or ignore, no matter what ideological or self-serving considerations the two sides might have. Man chooses his friends, but he cannot choose his neighbors. They are simply there! Any policy that ignores this reality will not—even in the best of cases—be firmly grounded on geopolitical facts, upon which policies in our age must be founded.

This proximity either takes the form of confrontation, or of cooperation resulting in everyone's well-being. Which of these two options will win out in the end?

Experience has proven that since the unfortunate Islamic conflict between the Safavid and Ottoman Empires, wars, violence, and hatred do not lead to any useful decision that is in any party's interests. The Safavids did not turn into Ottomans, nor did the Ottomans become Safavids. This applies to any Islamic party when circumstances drag them into similar confrontations.

Such was the Iran-Iraq War, with all its bloody legacy, which gave birth to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and the second bloody war in the Gulf. The first war ended with each side back behind its borders, achieving neither victory nor gain, except lists of victims, casualties, and psychological suffering, as again happened in the second war.

This profound lesson must govern the new relationship in the Gulf between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Arab side, as represented by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the most prominent and largest of its countries. In the nature of the case, the other roles of the Arab Gulf nations

should also be taken into consideration, by virtue of their natural and objective size and ability, to influence that relationship in a logical balance that does not overstep its legitimate limits.

It should be noted that the Gulf was subjected to its most dangerous war when a country like Iraq, which has a small and limited geographic position on the Gulf, strove to turn into a primary Gulf power, which simply was incompatible with geographic logic.

Disruption and Power

The vital area for Iraq, by virtue of geographic logic itself, is the Fertile Crescent and the eastern Mediterranean, not the Gulf. When Iraq made this unnatural turn away from the eastern Mediterranean to the Gulf, this disruption occurred because of severed relations between Iraq and Syria—which had been the basic attraction for Iraqi policy since Iraq's establishment in the twenties. We see similar effects today in the Gulf, stemming from the Iraqi leadership's attempt to impose Iraq as a primary Gulf power, in clear contradiction to geographic and geopolitical logic. This logic is based on Iraq's very limited presence in Gulf waters, as opposed to its extensive geographic presence in the Fertile Crescent and the eastern Mediterranean. Resistance to simple geographic facts often results in disruptions and catastrophes like these. There is no doubt that continual Iranian pressure on Iraq in the second stage of the first Gulf war—after its withdrawal into its international border—was one of the factors enabling Iraq to inflate its Gulf presence. This contradicted geographic logic, and Iraq attempted a "correction" by occupying all of Kuwait's territory. (On the other hand, it is Israel was the beneficiary of Iraq's turning from the east to the Gulf.)

This brings us back to the elements and priorities of geographic and geopolitical truths. Their significance in the Gulf—simply—is that there are two primary regional powers, which are represented in light of those truths alone—regardless of any ideological or natural considerations—as the pivotal supports of any policies or realistic, objective security arrangements in the Gulf region. They are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran. Then come the other roles of the remaining Gulf states, according to size and importance, including Iraq, within the limits of its natural presence at the northern head of the Gulf, without increasing or decreasing, depending on the stability of the recognized international boundary.

Between Dream and Reality

This fact must be taken into consideration when forming any Arab security system within the framework of the "Damascus Declaration" or whatever. There must be reconciliation and harmony among the dreams of Arab states along the Gulf to strengthen the bonds between them and the other Arab states; and the geopolitical reality, which calls for a kind of balanced, cooperative partnership between Saudi Arabia and Iran for the purpose of establishing stability in the Gulf. This requirement will be one of the challenges that the Arab-Iranian strategic concept

faces while attempting to achieve this critical equilibrium without squandering capabilities and resources in a new Arab-Iranian contest under the banner of "Gulf security."

Naturally, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are headed toward strengthening their ties with the Arab world, especially its primary nations. Moreover, it is also natural that the kingdom establish with Iran a strategic understanding on Gulf security, starting from geographic facts before any other consideration. If Arabs and Iranians could reach this equilibrium, which would give each other its rights, perhaps it would be possible to achieve a more balanced and logical Arab-Iranian relationship, including convincing Iran—in return—that its long-range aspirations for the southern Nile valley (Sudan) also completely contradicts the simple logic of geography, just as does the denial of an Iranian role in the geographic structure of the Gulf! Perhaps Iran has gone so far into the southern Nile valley in order to confirm its role in the Gulf basin, saying to Egypt: "If you are there, we are here!"

Mutual Point of View

No matter what, both Iran and Saudi Arabia should reach a mutual point of view on the future of Iraq. It is a view that was expressed in a statement by Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim on the eve of the end of his visit to Saudi Arabia, that "any alternative to the regime, and any view of Iraq's future, must take into consideration the composition of the Iraqi people, on the basis of maintaining this composition without exception or violation of any part of it. The unity of Iraq and its territory must also be maintained, along with concern for the rights of its people, without discriminating among them on the basis of race or creed."

We should say that an understanding like this, through this political "speech," differs from the Supreme Council's theses during the Iran-Iraq War. It is possible that this is a serious preliminary to a Saudi-Iranian understanding on Iraq's future, which may gradually expand to become a more comprehensive understanding on the Gulf security situation as a whole. If this understanding occurs, it could lead to diminished reliance on international forces; and simplify the current bilateral, interlocking, and complex security arrangements among the nations of the region, many of which are—unfortunately—not sufficiently crystallized or clearly defined yet.

This would not be impossible, if it we could transcend the accumulations of the recent past, with something of the political sophistication that we think is abundantly present in the Saudi leadership, as well as in Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani, and in Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim and his colleagues on the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. In the council's statement after the visit, the council praised Saudi Arabia, saying that it "has an important place and status in the Islamic world," lauding the support it is giving to the Iraqi people in their present ordeal.

Arabs and Iranians, if they can transcend narrow religious and racial sensitivities, will discover that they are primary partners in building a proud Islamic civilization, and that

the most beautiful thing in this civilization is an Arab-Persian "marriage," from the Persian Sibawayh, the imam of Arab grammar; to Abu-Hanifah, the imam of Islamic jurisprudence; to Ibn-Sina [Avicenna], the imam of medicine and philosophy; and to the Caliph Ma'mun, who was of both Arab and Persian blood, from his Arab father and his Persian mother. He was one of the most brilliant caliphs of Islam, especially in his cultural and educational brilliance.

Can the Arabs and Iranians together rise to their original cultural level, which they created together, so that they may overcome the accretions of ages of decline for their mutual good, or rather, will they dare to discuss that, as a start?

Egyptian Workers Claim Harassment in Jordan

92AF0551B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
29 Feb 92 p 2

[Text] Cairo—Despite Jordanian Labor Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti's visit to Cairo and his assurances that Egyptian workers in Jordan are protected, the Jordanian authorities' arbitrary treatment of Egyptian workers is continuing. Cairo Airport is daily witnessing the arrival of large numbers of Egyptian workers repatriated by the Jordanian authorities. Five Egyptian workers deported by the Jordanian authorities returned to Cairo yesterday. One of them, called 'Ali 'Abd-al-Muhsin, 30 years old, was in a state of agitation upon arrival in Cairo Airport. He tried to fight with some Jordanian prominent personalities who were on the same plane, but airport security officials intervened to stop him.

The Egyptian worker claimed that the Jordanian authorities arrest Egyptian workers in the streets, raise false charges against them, and detain them in poor conditions. He said the Jordanian authorities detained him at the end of last January after returning from his workplace, despite the fact that he has a work permit. He was accused of panhandling and was released after paying 15 Jordanian dinars. Later, he was again detained in the metropolitan police jail. He said that a large number of Egyptians are held in this jail.

Ahmad Sa'id, 20 years old, said that after his arrest, he was detained in al-[Siwaqah] prison. He said the Jordanian authorities force the workers to clean the Jordanian staff's offices at four o'clock every morning.

GICO Studies Potential for Gulf Export Bank

92AE0250C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
14 Feb 92 p 11

[Unsigned article from Doha: "Establishment of Gulf Bank To Finance Exports, Promote Number of New Joint Ventures Under Study; 1992 Plan of 'Gulf Consulting Organization'"]

[Text] The Gulf Industrial Consulting Organization [GICO] is currently studying the feasibility of establishing a bank to finance and guarantee exports in Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries.

A responsible source at GICO stated that the 1992 plan covers a number of targeted activities and programs designed to advance development in GCC countries.

The source indicated that the plan includes upgrading the services of the industrial information bank by introducing the latest information equipment, methods, and systems to stay abreast of ongoing developments in this field, establishing a broad-scale program for developing, entering, and updating industrial information, diversifying data bases and information, and expanding data base coverage to raise services to the highest levels possible. In this framework, the 1992 information bank plan includes updating the data base for foreign investment in the Gulf region, continuing to prepare major economic indices for the Gulf region, and preparation of statistical reports for some industrial sectors in GCC countries.

The source added that the studies will also include determining foreign investment systems and policies, obstacles thereto, and means of enhancing foreign investment, in addition to industrialization in the Arab Gulf region, growth potential, the challenges of the nineties, and carrying out other studies concerning aluminum scrap manufacturing and petrochemical industries for the purpose of investigating the integration of this industry in the region.

He said that GICO's plan included promotion of a number of joint ventures in GCC countries, in addition to organizing several regional, Arab, and international conferences and seminars, the most important being preparations for the Fourth Conference of Industrialists in Kuwait, the Arab Aluminum Conference, and conducting five training seminars in the following fields:

- Preparation and evaluation of feasibility studies for industrial projects;
- Marketing industrial products
- Managing implementation of industrial projects;
- Industrial information systems;
- Production management.

He added that these courses are aimed at improving the competence of Gulf cadres and expanding the scope of beneficiaries of GICO experience.

Egypt To Sell Arms to Djibouti

92AF0551E Paris AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic
27 Jan 92 p 13

[Text] Cairo—Djibouti Prime Minister Barkat Gourad Hamadou's visit to Cairo last week raised many questions about France's role in supporting President Hasan Gouled's regime. Hamadou informed his Egyptian counterpart 'Atif Sidqi that his country is in dire need of Egyptian military support, consisting of Egyptian military personnel and some weapons, to control the disturbances that have broken out in the country.

In view of the successive developments in Djibouti, which culminated with fighting among its four major tribes (Afar, Issa, Somali, and Arab), the Egyptian Government's

response to Djibouti's request was reserved. Yet it demonstrated readiness to provide it with some light arms as part of its continuing aid. AL-DUWALIYAH has learned that a Djibouti military delegation visited a number of Egyptian arms factories. However, the size of the military deal, its type, and its financing are not yet exactly known. Most probably, the deal will be financed by some aid from the Gulf countries.

Observers in Cairo view the present French stance toward events in Djibouti to be ambiguous. Some of them even say that France wants to get rid of Houed's regime and that "it is looking for a replacement."

It is to be recalled that the French military base in Djibouti, established under an agreement between the two countries signed on the day Djibouti's independence was declared, is one of the largest French military bases overseas. Paris considers it a base for maintaining stability and preserving its interests, not only in the horn of Africa, but also in the whole of Africa and in the Pacific region.

The number of French military forces in Djibouti is about 4,350 troops, supported by a squadron of French Mirage fighters, Gazelle helicopters, some light naval units, and an armored unit.

France, which has long maintained a presence in Djibouti that dates back to the day when Napoleon Bonaparte signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the dignitaries of the city of Obock, has been seeking, through economic and military pressure, to select a suitable and "secured" regime, at this critical stage through which the horn of Africa is passing.

In light of this, Egypt wants to stay away from intruding in Djibouti's internal affairs, but it stands for the integrity of Djibouti's soil.

In view of the ambiguous situation now prevailing in Djibouti, which is threatening with the outbreak of a civil war similar to that of its neighbor Somalia, most of the Arab parties are trying, as much as they can, to remain cautious and to watch the situation, so that developments will not show them as supporting one tribe against another.

Observers in Cairo now believe that the continuing disturbances in Djibouti and in the horn of Africa pose a threat to Arab national security.

UAE To Import \$80 Million in Egyptian Foodstuffs

92AF0551A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
21 Jan 92 p 11

[Text] Cairo—'Adil al-Shahawi, chairman of the Egyptian Foods Industries Authority, told AL-HAYAH that agreement has been reached with a number of commercial establishments and businessmen in the UAE [United Arab Emirates] to increase cooperation between the Authority and the UAE through concluding new deals to export foodstuffs to the UAE valued at \$80 million. The deal includes dairy products and preserved and canned foodstuffs.

The chairman of the Foods Industries Authority said: "The authority will participate in all the fairs held in the UAE in mid-February in order to increase the Authorities' exports, 70 percent of which go to the UAE."

The chairman of the Foods Industries Authority attributed the shortage of certain Egyptian commodities to problems between agents and Egyptian exporters, and to other bureaucratic problems with debts and their repayment. He said that contacts have been made with those agents in order to resolve all problems.

He said that several contracts have been signed for the export of new Egyptian commodities that were not exported before, such as soap, of which \$10 million worth is being exported to Saudi markets; and acids used in industries and in detergents, which are being exported to the Gulf countries and Syria.

The authority chairman said that foods valued at \$20 million have recently been exported to Libya.

He pointed out that Arab importers' demand for Egyptian commodities underline the importance of packaging and speedy shipment to the Arab markets. This question is being discussed with Egyptian exporters in light of absolute export freedom from Egypt.

The authority chairman stated that the authority includes 19 companies producing sugar, oils, soap, detergents, fodder, dairy products, cigarettes, and juices. The authority's production in 1991 was 6.5 billion Egyptian pounds (\$2.2 billion) and exports totalled \$200 million, realizing a profit of \$150 million.

On the other hand, Hamid 'Atwah, chairman of the Egyptian Fairs Authority, told AL-HAYAH that the Egyptian Products Fair in Jiddah, which ended last week, achieved positive results and arranged deals between Egyptian businessmen and Saudi importers valued at \$80 million. Agreement has also been reached with 43 new agencies for the sale of Egyptian products in various Saudi towns, since Egyptian products having become very popular in Saudi markets. The chairman of the Egyptian Fairs Authority said that a number of offers have been made by Saudi chambers of commerce to set up Egyptian products fairs in Saudi towns, including an offer by the Riyadh Chamber of Commerce. The number of Egyptian companies that took part in the Jiddah fair was 239 companies.

Egyptian-Lebanese Trade Agreement To Be Signed

92AF0551C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 Feb 92 p 9

[Text] Cairo, London—Today in Cairo, Lebanese Economic Minister Marwan Hamadah and his Egyptian counterpart, Dr. Yusri Mustafa, will sign a new trade agreement between the two countries to replace the old agreement, dated 27 June 1956, and its amendments and attached protocols.

The day before yesterday the Egyptian and Lebanese ministers discussed ways to develop economic relations and increase trade between the two countries. They also reviewed details of the agreement and prepared lists of the

Egyptian and Lebanese commodities to be included in the agreement, and the customs and preferential exemptions for a number of commodities.

The two sides also discussed procedures for the trade agreement, which provide that commercial transactions be carried out in hard currencies, as well as procedures for concluding a mutual deal that would develop trade and promote the commodities and products of both countries.

Dr. Rushdi 'Abd-al-Qadir, the Egyptian trade counselor and minister plenipotentiary at the Trade Representation [presumably at the Egyptian Embassy in Beirut] told AL-HAYAH that the agreement will lead to concluding several mutual deals between the two countries that would increase trade between Egypt and Lebanon to 100 million Egyptian pounds per year, versus 64 million pounds last year.

Emile Jabbarah, acting Lebanese Economic director, spent a week in Cairo, during which he reviewed the agreement clauses and put the final touches on them.

The agreement, of which AL-HAYAH obtained details, provides for developing and consolidating economic and trade relations on the basis of mutual interests; and both sides doing all they can to facilitate and activate trade in accordance with current laws, decisions, and regulations incorporated in it with respect to the goods and commodities included in the agreement and considered an integral part of it.

The agreement provides for exempting both sides from customs fees and applicable fees, with the exception of sales tax. With regard to sales tax, commodities exchanged between the two countries are to be treated as national products.

The two sides will try to give preference to national means of transport and maritime, air, and overland shipping of the traded commodities between the two countries.

The agreement provides for mutual participation in international fairs and markets and in temporary or permanent fairs, and for providing the necessary facilities in accordance with current laws and regulations in both countries.

The agreement is valid for one year from the date it is signed and instruments of ratification are exchanged. It is automatically renewable, unless one of the two sides advises the other, in writing, of its wish to terminate it, three months prior to its expiration at the end of every period.

The list of Lebanese goods covered by the agreement includes 35 types of commodities and manufactured materials, such as chemicals, medical serums, yarns, iron and aluminum bars, electric elevators, printing presses, grindstones, electric wires, and power transformers.

It is noted that the Lebanese list does not include any foodstuffs, fruits, or citrus, on which Lebanon depends and which it considers as its most important agricultural exports. These products occupy a significant position in Lebanese exports.

The list of Egyptian goods include 67 kinds of food and industrial materials, including fresh and frozen vegetables, oils, cheeses, honey, leather, printing ink, household equipment, sheet metal, diesel engines, dry batteries, television sets, railroad cars, automobiles, motorcycles, and hunting rifles.

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Goals of Alternative University in Jerusalem

92AE0262B Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
14 Feb 92 p 6

[Article: "Plan to Establish 'Palestinian University' Seeks To Provide Higher-Education Opportunities to Everybody; Thousands of Our Children Have High-School Certificate But no Opportunity To Complete Their Studies; Foremost Objectives Are To Educate Generations, Strengthen Devotion to Country, To Curtail Emigration"]

[Text] We publish here the text of the letter submitted by Dr. Ahmad al-'Ilmi, the Palestinian University dean-designate, and the attachments to it. Dr. al-'Ilmi has submitted them on behalf of "this University's Board of Trustees":

[begin letter] Esteemed chairman of the Higher Education Council: Greetings. I submit to you this request in the hope that the esteemed Higher Education Council will agree to recognize diplomas issued by the Palestinian University, scheduled to be established in Jerusalem, as diplomas equivalent to those issued by other universities in the occupied territories. Following are outlines introducing the university that is planned to be established, keeping in mind that we are prepared to provide all details you may wish to learn about this university:

Name: The Palestinian University.

Headquarters: Jerusalem.

Board of Trustees: His Eminence Shaykh Sa'd-al-Din al-'Ilmi, chairman; Hanna Sinyurah, Dr. Hisham al-Dajjani, Dr. 'Asim al-Khalidi, Dr. Hilmi al-Muhtadi, 'Abd-al-Rahim Mahmud, Engineer Muhammad Nusaybah, and Dr. Ahmad al-'Ilmi.

Dean: Dr. Ahmad al-'Ilmi.

University Objectives

1. Highlight Jerusalem's place in education and emphasize its Arab character;
2. Strengthen the sense of belonging to the land and to the Arab nation;
3. Enlighten future generations with the social and economic beliefs prevailing in the world;
4. Entrench the human concepts that civilized society accepts in these times;
5. Develop the youth's self-reliance and train them to enter society;
6. Nurture positive personal traits in accordance with Arab society's needs and aspirations;

7. Provide the student with skills and an education that help him to engage in pioneering activity;

8. Expand educational opportunities and diversify education to offer students numerous options, so that they can meet the needs of our growing society;

9. Provide a solution to high school graduates who find it difficult to continue their higher education—a difficulty which has surfaced in a glaring manner under the occupation and in wake of the acts to suppress the Palestinian intifadah;

10. Curtail youth emigration by making higher education available to them locally in their towns and villages;

11. Provide opportunity to people who missed the chance for higher education in the past, or who wish to obtain a higher education for various reasons;

12. Try to provide higher education to prisoners.

Academic branches: Literary branches.

Type of study: Studies will be conducted by correspondence. Textbooks and lectures will be mailed to students. Term exams will be held for students at centers in various parts of the country, located close to where students live. The university administration will try to acquire the military government's approval to permit jailed students to take their exams in jail.

Enrollment: Students of all ages who have gotten a grade of more than 60 percent in the high-school general examination will be enrolled. Study duration: Studies will last eight terms, and each term will last four months.

Diploma: A Bachelor of Arts diploma will be granted to every student who successfully completes the scheduled curricula. Diplomas issued by local universities prior to graduation shall be accepted after they are equated with courses taught at The Palestinian University. This university shall also issue a transcript, listing courses successfully completed by a student.

This is a brief glimpse of this project. We hope that we will receive your approval of this request as soon as possible. We are prepared to answer all inquiries about the project.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees'
Dr. Ahmad al-'Ilmi

Palestinian University [presumably Attachment 1]

Feasibility: Since the occupation started in 1967, our people began suffering all kinds of harassment and obstacles to conducting their affairs, including their pursuit of higher education. The problem intensified when Arab universities reduced the number of Palestinian students they would accommodate. Moreover, the citizens' declining standard of living here has made higher education, even if available, a burdensome financial problem to the ordinary citizen.

The inauguration of local universities has had a great impact on solving this problem for the country's youth, but since the inception of the intifadah and closure of the local

universities, thousands of our youth who have their high-school certificate cannot find a circle to receive and attend to them.

Some of our local universities have made an endeavor to continue providing higher education, but this endeavor has been limited. Even if we take into account the Missionary Work and Principles of Religion [al-da'wah w-usul] College, which has not been officially shut down, we would find that the percentage of students attending lectures has dropped by 50 percent. Even though the other half wants to attend [lectures], the strikes, curfews, barriers, and insults that students face on their way to college impede their attendance of lectures.

There are 14,000 students who sit for the high-school examination annually. Prior to the intifadah, 60-70 percent of the students passed the examination. Of these, the West Bank and Gaza Strip universities and institutes of higher learning absorbed nearly 5,000 students annually. Last year, nearly 80 percent of students passed, meaning that more than 11,000 male and female students got their high-school certificate that year.

1. If we consider the figures prior to the intifadah, we find that there were 2,500 students who couldn't travel to continue their higher education because of the occupation.

2. On the other hand, our local universities have disregarded the problem of students who had gotten their high-school certificates in the past but could not enroll in a local university for reasons of their own. The number of these students is estimated at nearly 4,000. For personal reasons, especially because of living and psychological conditions, these students were still unable to enroll in universities when their problems disappeared. What this means is that there is a large group of citizens who are able to acquire higher degrees, but whose circumstances do not permit them to do so.

3. The third group that concerns us is an oppressed group that began with the start of the occupation, namely prisoners. Many of our young people have served jail sentences ranging from several years to 10 or 20 years, or even more. Thus, they have been isolated from society's normal life and they cannot continue their education. The number of people in this group has doubled since the intifadah. It is estimated that 12,000 citizens are jailed. Of these, at least one-third have a high school education, meaning that nearly 4,000 youths have been prevented from acquiring a university education because of their detention.

The Arab University of Beirut solves the problems of some students in these three groups, but it hasn't solved the problem of higher education for prisoners.

In addition, the Jerusalem Free University has solved the problems of some of these students, but it will not solve the prisoners' problem because this university relies on television and radio equipment that may not be available in jails.

Therefore, and to provide higher education for these three groups, especially prisoners, there is an urgent need to

establish The Palestinian University, which relies on the system of study by correspondence.

For this reason, even if the thousands that we have mentioned do not enroll in The Palestinian University, which offers the solution to their problems, and even if only 100 young prisoners enroll in this university, then this is enough justification to open this university.

Regarding economic feasibility, The Palestinian University doesn't seek profit. The difficult living and financial conditions that overwhelm the citizens under occupation do not permit aggrandizement at the expense of education. This is why the university fees will be affordable for most students.

It is evident from this that The Palestinian University will not be a rival to the local universities and that it does not aspire to replace them. On the contrary, The Palestinian University will complement our universities in carrying out the message. On the other hand, it will fill the gap for certain groups that cannot pursue higher education—a gap that hasn't been dealt with before.

Provisional Directives

Article 1. The Board of Trustees shall assume the following responsibilities and powers:

A. Bolster the university's independence and adopt all the means to advance it and to enable it to carry out its message and accomplish its goals.

B. Secure resources for the university and organize the investment of its funds.

C. Discuss and pass the annual budget.

D. Discuss and pass internal regulations concerning financial affairs.

Article 2. University faculty members shall be appointed by decision of the Board of Trustees.

Article 3. In addition to the other prerequisites and specifications stipulated in these directives, a faculty member shall be required to meet the following conditions upon appointment:

A. Be free of diseases and infirmities that prevent or impede him from performing his duty. This shall be certified by a medical committee's report.

B. Be of good reputation and conduct, and not convicted of a felony or of a misdemeanor in violation of honor.

C. Be capable of performing his university work.

Article 4. A faculty member shall be required to have a Ph.D. in the branch he wishes to teach and he shall have no less than three years of experience in university teaching.

Article 5. Every contracted professor shall be required to submit a book containing the material to be taught to students in the discipline he is going to teach, in return for an agreed-upon sum of money.

Article 6. Copyright to this book shall belong to The Palestinian University, which will print the book and supply it to students.

Article 7. If a contracted faculty member has already written a book containing the material that will be taught, then agreement shall be concluded with him to obtain the copyright for The Palestinian University in return for an agreed-upon sum of money.

Article 8. Every faculty member shall be required to write test questions and to grade student's answer papers in return for an agreed-upon wage.

Article 9. In the university's initial phase, no faculty member shall be required to perform at The Palestinian University any work other than what has been mentioned in these directives. Thus, a faculty member shall be free to conclude a contract with any other university or foundation at the same time that he is under contract with The Palestinian University.

University Location

The Palestinian University center will be in Jerusalem, where it will lease one or two large apartments for this purpose for the first five years, at least. Considering that no lectures will be given at the center, then it can be a modest center that primarily houses the administrative apparatus.

After the first five years, a building will be purchased in Jerusalem, considering that the number of students and professors is expected to have doubled by then.

A relatively small administrative apparatus will manage university affairs initially. A computer will be used in later phases.

A library will be established after a complete premises is purchased for the university, when it will be possible to provide enough space. In the initial stages, students will rely on textbooks chosen by professors. The university will endeavor to supply these books to its students.

Higher Studies

The Palestinian University does not plan to offer higher studies in its initial phases. But if it succeeds in its services and if it finds that there are numerous requests from students to the university to provide higher studies, then it will consider the matter, keeping in mind that making such studies available depends on numerous factors [end letter].

[AL-NAHAR comment] The letter and its supplements were followed by details of the various curricula and areas of study offered during the academic years at this university, and details of the costs of this new project.

Article Examines Unemployment in West Bank

92AE0262A Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
16 Feb 92 p 7

[Exclusive study: "Occupied Territories' Citizens: 'Unemployed Workers;' Capitalists: Will They Mend What Time Has Ruined?"]

[Text] The stifling and deep-seated economic crisis in the occupied Arab territories has, with all its components, generated numerous negative consequences that have reflected, in turn, on Palestinian society as a whole.

The most significant of these consequences is that the local Palestinian economy cannot absorb local labor. As a result, a large part of this labor force, particularly people with special talents and skilled workers, has migrated to the Israeli labor market or gone abroad. Unemployment has spread among all social sectors. Therefore, this phenomenon represents not only an economic consequence, but also a strong economic factor paralyzing the local economy.

This means that economic conditions, especially labor conditions, in the occupied Arab territories have worsened to a degree that makes it difficult to determine the dimensions of the resulting damage, especially when we learn that this damage is coupled with a drop in wages and a constant rise in prices and inflation.

Therefore, this report intends to shed light on the real situation of Palestinian labor and on the condition of the workers, many of whom have university degrees, have built a lofty edifice for a number of Arab countries and, in return, have been ejected from these countries.

Fate of Manpower

A large part of the Palestinian workforce has found itself sleeping on the sidewalk under icy rain and freezing cold. But the persistent question is: Why has the Palestinian worker found himself unemployed? Why haven't we been able to provide alternatives, especially since the unemployed constitute a large part of society, and since most of them are classified as extremely poor?

Here, we must stress that we will not touch on the prevalent political conditions, which have a major role in the deteriorating economic situation. We will confine ourselves to some economic aspects that have played a destructive role in fragmenting and dispersing Palestinian labor.

Wages and Inflation

Securing sustenance has forced Palestinian workers to work in Israeli economic activities and projects because there are no alternatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and because the Israeli authorities control all aspects of Palestinian economic life. Consequently, the Palestinian economy has been unable to develop in a way that meets its basic needs.

Despite the restrictions imposed by Israel on Palestinian labor, whether by promulgating laws, decrees, and administrative regulations restricting the movement of Palestinian labor in the Israeli market; by expelling Palestinian workers; by issuing them green cards; or by forcing them to acquire the required permits to enter Israel—despite all these restrictions, the Israeli labor market continues to be in dire need of low-wage Arab labor.

Statistics show that the wages of a Palestinian worker in Israel are no more than 40 percent the Israeli worker's wages, even though Palestinian workers put in no less than

three additional hours of work every day. This means that the surplus value that the Israeli business owner reaps from the Palestinian worker is many times the value he would get if he employed an Israeli worker in his place.

The insult to the Palestinian worker does not end here. Jobs entrusted to these workers are most often require great exertion, or they are dirty and unsafe jobs. Moreover, Palestinian workers are not protected against dismissal. Palestinian laborers are not entitled to any labor rights, because nearly 75 percent of the Palestinian workers are employed as daily workers. As for the other Palestinian workers, even though the government (Histadrut) takes out of their wages the same deductions it takes from Israeli workers, they get none of the benefits or returns that their Israeli counterparts get for these deductions.

Work Hours

Even though the labor law sets the weekly work hours at 48 hours for labor employed in local [Palestinian] establishments, we find that workers put in more than eight hours of work daily. This is due to one of two things: the business owners' greed, or because the worker wants to work extra hours as a result of low wages, as compared to high prices and inflation. Most workers cannot meet the expenses of the families they support. As for workers who do not put in extra work hours, it is because of the recession and because the labor market cannot absorb them.

A simple comparison between the worker's wages and the purchasing power of these wages enables us to truly realize how low the wages are. A British construction worker, for example, earns a monthly wage of 700 pounds sterling, whereas a West Bank worker earns a monthly wage of just 500 shekels. If we assume that this worker purchases a refrigerator, he will have to pay 2,400 shekels for it, or the equivalent of 48 percent of his [annual] salary, whereas the British worker will have to pay 250 pounds, i.e., 800 shekels, just 35.7 percent of his monthly salary.

This means that the Palestinian worker can purchase such a product if he is willing to dispense with the full wages of nearly five months, regardless of his daily living expenses.

Similarly, one can compare Palestinian and Israeli family incomes. An Arab worker shoulders the responsibility of supporting four members, especially since the average Palestinian family size is six to seven members, whereas the average Israeli family consists of 3.8 members, supported by 1.6 persons.

Despite the Israeli family's small size when compared with the Palestinian family, the Israeli family, last year the Israeli family's basket of purchases amounted to nearly 3,480 new shekels, meaning that this family's purchase basket greatly exceeds the Palestinian family's purchase basket. Thus, a 7-member Palestinian family has to live on a portion that doesn't exceed, at best, half the sum needed by a 4-member Israeli family. This means that the material conditions necessary for the life of the Palestinian worker and his family, including food, housing, and clothing, are unavailable.

This proves conclusively that a large portion of Palestinian families are below the poverty line, and that the other portion lives on the average wage line. The best proof of this is a statistical report issued by UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees] showing that 6,440 families in the West Bank, or 9.1 percent of the total number of registered refugees, are extremely poor families, and that 9,537 families in the Gaza Strip, or 13.4 percent of the registered refugees, are in the same category.

Commenting on this, Ahmad Sultan from Hebron has said: "My brother and I alone support our family, which consists of 15 members. We used to work in Israel. When we were laid off, we went to the Labor Office to collect our allowances, but the office refused to give them to us. Since then, i.e., for the past three months, we have been unemployed."

Ahmad 'Aql, a 60-year-old teacher from Halhul, has said: "I support a family of nine, even though I work only one or two days a week."

The economic situation is worsening and employment is scarce, if it can be found at all. 'Aql's income cannot meet the basic needs. The additional expenses, such as schooling, clothing, food, and other expenses that people need, make us pause with perplexity, and wonder: Where are the owners of national factories and where are the capitalists who hoard money in the banks and do not use it to serve society? Why aren't there Palestinian reactions compatible with the dimensions of the tragedy, which is casting its grim shadows over society? Are we tongue-tied, and is the only thing we can say: "Can we mend what time has ruined!"

Hebron Report on Storm Damage

92AE0262C Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
17 Feb 92 p 4

[Article: "Complete Report on Storm Damage in Hebron Governorate; Losses Estimated at \$2.5 Million; Homes Destroyed, Streets Blocked, and Poles Smashed; Emergency Services"]

[Text] In the past two weeks, Hebron, like other Palestinian towns, was subjected to a snow storm, heavy rains, and severe winds that caused great damage and heavy losses. Despite snow and rains, our correspondent in Hebron has visited some mayors and has spoken to others by phone.

Initially, a visit was paid to Hebron Mayor Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zir and the municipality officials. We obtained from him a detailed assessment of the damage and losses, as well as the municipality's efforts to overcome this crisis. Dr. al-Zir provided these details:

Electricity

"A total of 27 poles, five of them medium-size poles; 50 power grids; two high-tension towers; and an underground line have been put out of operation as a result of the weather conditions, which have knocked over a large number of electrical poles and power lines. Consequently, power supply to the town was cut off for a time, especially in al-Ramah area, which suffered a 6-day power outage.

Emergency crews worked day and night to restore the situation to normal. God be thanked, electricity has been restored to all areas as a result of these blessed efforts."

Water

"Water supplies to certain areas were interrupted because they were unavailable at the sources due to pumps breaking down and to tanks rupturing as a result of water freezing in the pipes. Water supply to Princess 'Aliyah Hospital was cut off. An emergency crew brought water to the hospital and repaired whatever could be repaired, keeping in mind that it has been impossible to repair all water meters because of snow and stormy weather conditions."

Sewage

"The major problem is in sewer flooding caused by an enormous volume of water flowing into the sewer system. We have made major efforts to overcome this problem. Very regrettably, large quantities of sewage have flooded streets and some homes. Numerous town squares have become like pools, with water rising to 30 cm, especially in al-Sahlah area in the southern part of town. We need to replace and repair a large number of sewer networks. This will cost vast sums of money."

Streets

"Most town streets need to be repaired and resurfaced because of the potholes and the cracks that have developed in them."

Municipality's Efforts

"Emergency teams, and water and sewer teams, have worked day and night to return the situation to normal, to prevent the danger from downed powerlines, and to restore electricity. They have helped citizens harmed by the flood waters and we have responded to an appeal from the Red Crescent Center in Wadi al-Tuffah and from the Muhammad 'Ali Hospital to reduce the flood waters inundating them. We have also supplied bread to poor families. Because the snow has impeded citizens' movement, municipality vehicles have operated as ambulances, transporting the sick to hospitals and health centers and bringing them medicine. There have been cases when emergency vehicles have transported the dead to be buried.

"We have not confined our efforts to the town of Hebron, but have extended them to Halhul area and to all villages that have requested assistance."

Total Losses

- Road repair will cost 3.5 million Israeli shekels, and so will new roads, because most of the roads need to be completely replaced.
- Electrical poles and transformers: 200,000 shekels;
- Sewers: 150,000 shekels;
- Water pipelines: No total loss figures have been disclosed.
- Extra diesel fuel and benzine consumed by vehicles, bulldozers, and machinery; and overtime employee wages: 50,000 shekels.

- Thus, the total sum amounts to nearly 4 million shekels. This is beyond the municipality's capacity, especially in view of its budget deficit."

Concluding Word From Mayor

"I want to express profound thanks to the employees and to the emergency teams. I wish to draw the citizens' attention to the fact that, in view of the weather conditions, they should alleviate the pressure on the electrical service, for fear that it will be lost to all.

"Regrettably, there are citizens who contact the municipality, argue with the employees, and demand that electricity be restored if it is out, knowing perfectly well that the emergency teams are working day and night and that when power is cut off, it is cut off for everybody, even to the engineers and the mayor. We are all suffering from the same problem. These people have to be more patient. The first thing that the emergency teams do before they restore power is to prevent any danger and harm that could be caused by the power lines strewn in the streets, because they could electrocute people. The first thing we do is to fix the power lines to prevent harm, and then we restore power. This requires a great deal of time and effort. However, this shouldn't stop me from reiterating my thanks to whomever has worked to return the citizens' lives to normal, including employees and citizens who have helped us and have donated their bulldozers, their efforts, and their technical expertise.

"Before I conclude my address, I wish to draw attention to an important point, namely the dilapidated buildings in Suq al-Laban in the older part of town. Poor people live under the roofs of these buildings and their lives are in danger because their homes are ancient, having been built hundreds of years ago. If exposed to another storm, these homes are likely to collapse. Therefore, I appeal to international organizations to help us solve this problem. The old town needs to be repaired and restored, as has been done with old Jerusalem. This requires, of course, great resources and it is exorbitantly expensive. Old Hebron is a historical archaeological site located next to the venerable al-Ibrahimi Mosque and the tombs of honorable prophets."

Our correspondent then went to [Dura], in Hebron District, where he interviewed Mayor 'Abd-al-Fattah Dudin, and got the following information from him:

"Because of the severe storms and winds, and as a result of the heavy rains and snows, damages have exceeded all expectations. But we have, thanks be to God, surveyed the damages and have tried to deal with them gradually. Major damage has been sustained by:

- Main road and street networks: Rains have washed away the greater part of the unpaved roads, in addition to sidewalks and medians on the main street.
- Electricity grid: Thunderstorms burnt out a large number of grids and severe winds toppled a number of poles. Consequently, there was a 3-day power outage until the grid was repaired and the poles were replaced.

- Water network: Ice caused a large number of water meters to burst and a large number of manholes to be washed away.
- Thus, the total damage amounts to 151,660 shekels."

Municipal Efforts

"Emergency crews worked day and night and responded to the citizens' calls for help in Dura and in all the adjacent villages, such as al-Sumu' and al-Zahiriyyah. We treated all injuries and transported all emergency cases, including 15 cases of childbirth, to the hospital.

"Seven homes, all vacant, have collapsed. We have also evacuated citizens from homes that have developed cracks."

Concluding Statement

"I beg everybody to be more patient, because the municipality has spared no effort in any area. I beg them to rest assured, because we have taken all the necessary emergency precautions."

From Dura, our correspondent went to Yattah, where she met with Mayor Isma'il Abu-Hamid, who provided her with the following details:

1. The electrical grid has sustained damage. More than 10 low-tension poles and four high-tension towers have been knocked over, especially in the higher elevations. Emergency crews repaired the damage and restored power in less than five hours.
2. The water network has sustained damage, considering that numerous water lines, especially exposed lines, burst as a result of low temperatures. The ice wave also destroyed numerous solar heaters. Grid maintenance crews have repaired the damage.
3. Roads have been damaged, in the form of potholes.
4. Damage has been sustained by buildings, especially in the older part of town, where 10 old inhabited houses and 15 uninhabited houses adjacent to the street collapsed, thus blocking traffic. The municipality's engineering crew, in cooperation with the emergency crew, evacuated the buildings and removed debris from the streets. The cost of the above damages amounts to 100,000 shekels.

"In this regard, we appeal to the humanitarian organizations, foundations, and other establishments to extend a helping hand to Yattah Municipality and the citizens of Yattah, especially to the owners of the collapsed buildings, so that the municipality will be able to provide all the services needed by the citizens and be able to repair what has been damaged by the storm."

Halhul Municipality sources provided the following information in a telephone conversation:

- A. Water network: Water lines and meters and solar heaters burst, causing damages worth 40,000 shekels.
- B. Road network: A number of walls built along streets collapsed from water pressure. The cost for rebuilding these walls is estimated at 20,000 shekels.

C. The main danger is seen in the damage inflicted on nature, such as forests, olive orchards, vineyards, and almond orchards, as a result of the collapse of the stone terraces supporting these trees, and also as a result of thunderstorms.

D. A large number of poultry and livestock have either drowned or frozen to death because of power outages and lack of heating. The losses are estimated at 500,000 shekels.

E. Damage has been sustained by powerlines, refugee camps, bedouin camps, and remote villages. Their losses are heavy and can only be estimated by experts or committees, especially damages suffered by terraced farmlands, whose terraces have collapsed in many places.

BAHRAIN

Government Agrees To Build New Port

92P40163A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
4 Mar 92 p 57

[Text] The government has agreed to a plan to build a new freight port in the southeast costing between 76 and 100 million Bahraini dinars (\$185-265 million). The Portuguese [Bardfabril] Company is doing the final economic impact study, to be completed in May, according to an agreement with the Ministry of Electricity, Water and Public Works, the Ministry of Finance and the National Economy, and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development [AFESD] headquartered in Kuwait. AFESD agreed before the Gulf war to invest \$80 million in the project, while it agreed recently to loan Bahrain 22 million Bahraini dinars (\$112 million) for basic economic projects such as upgrading hospitals and the Manama/al-Muharraq road.

JORDAN

Article Describes Major Political Factions

92AE0261A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
12 Feb 92 pp 28, 30

[Unsigned article from Amman: "Following Two Years' Activity, Movement; Jordan: Map of Political Parties, Tendencies"]

[Text] Current events in Jordan in terms of the multitude and multiplicity of parties is contradictory to the political and intellectual concept of a party. The reason for this is that, while Jordan has a large number of parties, they are lacking in any clear difference in the political platforms they espouse and for which they were established.

For decades in Jordan, political parties have fallen along four lines considered common denominators for the vast majority of Jordanians. It is hard for someone observing or studying political party movement in Jordan to find party categories other than in the following four trends: the nationalists; the religious tendency; the centrist, national, or conservative tendency; and the leftists. Parties in Jordan, or proposed political parties, can be assigned to these four tendencies.

Four Tendencies

The nationalists consist of a group of parties, existing or proposed, about 14 in all. Among the most important of these are the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party (Iraqi wing), the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party (Syrian wing), the Progressive Democratic Nationalists (proposed), the Arab Democratic Party (proposed), the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party (Unified Command), the Arab Vanguard Movement (proposed), the Syrian National Socialist Party (party), the Nasirite Unionists (proposed), and the Arab Unity Movement (proposed).

The Islamic tendency consists of about 10 religious parties and movements that have existed for decades or which are now at the formation stage. It will be noted that apart from the Muslim Brotherhood [MB] group and the Islamic Liberation Party [ILP], the proposed Islamic parties and movements subsumed under the heading of the Islamic tendency are MB and ILP offshoots. In addition to the MB and ILP, there are the Mu'tazilah [a early Islamic theological school], the Democratic Social Justice Grouping, the Islamic Jihad Movement-Jerusalem, the Islamic Jihad Movement/al-Aqsa Phalangists, the Democratic Islamic Arabic Movement, the Dar al-Koran group, the al-Da'wah group, and the Islamic Arab Renewal Party.

The patriotic tendency consists of 13 parties competing among themselves as to which most properly represents the political direction of the Jordanian regime. Intellectual issues are totally lacking in this set of parties. Their platforms can be described as entirely based on glorifying Jordan, the Jordanian nation, and Jordan's leadership. The researcher will naturally find that at the head of each of these parties is a traditional conservative political personage, or several political figures who once held ministerial or political posts in the government. The Unionist Democratic Grouping, for example, is headed by Dr. Jamal al-Sha'ir (former minister of health and a traditional politician). The Covenant Party is headed by 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Majali (former officer, former Public Security director, and brother of Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, head of the Jordanian delegation negotiating in the peace process). The Party of the Future is headed by Sulayman 'Arar (present deputy and former minister). The same applies to all the other parties of this tendency, they being the Constitutional Front, the Democratic Party for Unity and Justice, the Ummah Party, the Workers' Party, the Jordanian National Party, the Arab People's Party, and the Arab Renaissance Party [al-Nahdah].

Leftist Tendency

The leftist tendency is composed of existing parties and organizations which have all adopted scientific Marxism as their intellectual outline and guide for political and social action. The Communist Party, in its traditional sense, is considered the main sponsor of this group of 10 parties.

What is extremely clear about parties of this tendency is that a number of them share the word "Communist" as a common denominator. For example, there is the Jordanian Communist Party, the Communist Workers' Party,

and the Jordanian Communist Party-Revolutionary Path. The second thing to be observed about them is that some Palestinian leftist organizations taking Leninist Marxism as their political ideology, such as the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP] and the Democratic Front [for the Liberation of Palestine, DFLP], have undergone a transformation and are diving into Jordan's experiment with parties by separating out a number of their organizational cadres to form proposed Jordanian parties. For example, cadres of the Democratic Front in Jordan turned into a proposed party under the name of the People's Democratic Party of Jordan (assembly). This party immediately split to form another party called the Jordanian Democratic Party. The party split occurred at the same time as a split in the DFLP. When Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh separated from Nayif Hawatimah, his party cadres split off to form the new party. The Jordanian Democratic Party for Popular Unity is also made up of PFLP cadres in Jordan.

Party Map

The party map in Jordan is unstable and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future, at least. Despite passage of two years of party activity in Jordan, the parties' having come out into the open, and attempts to form new parties, some are likely to go out of business. The others may find themselves forced to combine with another party or parties, all of which rely on a single intellectual or ideological concept.

This generalization does not apply, however, to the Islamic tendency or the MB movement, in particular, since they constitute an obvious exception, in light of the results of the parliamentary elections held in Jordan in late 1989. Yet those elections may not be a proper gauge of the power of each of Jordan's political tendencies, since the results were actually the outcome of accumulated decades of absent public freedoms and emergency laws that had lasted over 20 years. Moreover, the ban on political parties, tendencies, and forces—apart from the MB—practicing party or political activity, under the threat of imprisonment or pursuit, enabled the MB to intensify their presence in Jordan freely and with no competition worth mentioning. The formation of Jordan's parliament is certain to change in any coming parliamentary election. It will not keep the form it had in 1989.

Egyptian-Syrian Stand on Libya, Iraq Hailed

JN2003105792 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 Mar 92 p 20

["An Arab Opinion" Column by Mahmud al-Rimawi: "An Arab Stand Against Western Threats"]

[Text] The clear position which was adopted in the Egyptian-Syrian summit against the threats to impose sanctions on Libya deserves to be the basis for a collective Arab position. It is now perfectly obvious that the Washington-London-Paris axis does not desire a solution to the crisis with Libya, but is instead trying to teach this Arab country a "lesson," tarnish its reputation, and harm it materially

and morally. To escalate the crisis to the point of threatening Libya with an embargo is a form of blackmail and provocation. Therefore, one of the primary duties is to put solidarity with Libya into practice by maintaining the level of the existing relations, and preserving all forms of exchanges and dealings with it, based on rejecting any resolutions aimed at politicizing a crisis that was not originally a political one.

The Egyptian-Syrian stand was timely, given the heated lobbying of the three permanent members of the Security Council who want to compel the other members to approve sanctions against the Jamahiriyyah. We hope that the message has reached all concerned. It is illogical to use the United Nations in a way that paralyzes its role and turns it into a means of giving the big members a free hand while tying the hands of the United Nations in settling disputes.

Now that the crisis has taken the path of escalation despite all attempts to contain it, all indications are that the tripartite Western axis is bent on forcing the issuance of resolutions against Libya. This will not leave Libya any other choice but to cooperate with all the Arab states and the Arab League to break any unjust embargo that might be imposed, similar to the one which is still being imposed on fraternal Iraq despite its commitment to implement UN resolutions, including the unfair ones.

It was both sound and important for the Egyptian-Syrian summit to adopt a position opposed to the use of force against Iraq. There is no need or justification for military escalation, nor is there any justification for maintaining silence over the daily threats issued by London and Washington against Baghdad. It would be a good thing indeed if those who are issuing threats were robbed of any Arab cover to justify their aggression against an Arab country that is committed to international resolutions.

We had hoped that this Egyptian-Syrian position would be coupled with a stand against the continuation of the unjust embargo against Iraq and the Iraqis, and that with the call to lift this embargo it would move forward to revive Arab solidarity, turn over a new leaf, and benefit from the bitter experience of the past.

In conclusion, we say that any embargo against Libya must be countered and that the embargo against Iraq must be broken. It is unreasonable to support an embargo on one Arab country, and stand against an embargo on another.

KUWAIT

Emir Comments on Women's Suffrage

92P40153A Cairo UKTUBAR in Arabic 16 Feb 92 pp 5-7

[Interview with Emir of Kuwait Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah by Editor in Chief Salah Muntasir; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [Muntasir] Many issues are being debated in Kuwait, among them the parliamentary elections in October. Women continue to be deprived of political

rights in Kuwait, despite the fact that they participate with men in many fields of activity. These days, the subject of women's rights in the elections comes up frequently in Kuwait. It is legitimate, it is said today in Kuwait, for women to have this right. They faced the crisis with the same strength as the men did. All of Kuwait remembers the story of Sarah al-'Utaybi, the first female martyr during the occupation by Iraq. Sarah al-'Utaybi put on a belt holding powerful explosives, stormed a position containing a large number of Iraqi troops and killed 20 of them at once. Sarah became a martyr, knowing that she would not return. However, she did not hesitate for one moment. This is the legitimacy that women emphasize. Why do you not give them the right to participate in the elections?

[Al-Sabah] I personally was the first to speak about the bravery of Kuwaiti women and the idea of political rights for them. Some bring up the constitution, but the constitution does not bar this and the election law should be modified. I do not want to bring up all these matters at once. I truly believe in their role, but on these issues, we will not rush. We will study all opinions, and this takes time.

LEBANON

Nasrallah on Wahhabis, Lebanese Forces, Resistance

92AE0243A Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 7 Feb 92 p 9

[Article: "His Eminence al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah: We Support Law, Order in This Country But We Cannot Abide Impounding Resistance, Arresting its Fighters"]

[Text] His Eminence al-Sayyid Hasan Nasrallah opened his Friday sermon by discoursing on the [Prophet's] nocturnal journey [al-isra'] and his midnight journey to the seven heavens [al-mi'raj]. He opined that the Prophet's two journeys had a fundamental unifying dimension, manifested through the many incidents that he encountered during the journeys.

He added that the al-Haram mosque, from which the Messenger took off on his nocturnal journey, and the al-Aqsa mosque, from which he embarked on his midnight journey to the seven heavens, are both under Israeli occupation today.

He said that the Palestinian people should reject any manner of conspiracy against it in the form of patriation.

He added that the Lebanese Forces remains an Israeli pawn and has not abandoned its ties to the enemy, as clearly manifested by the handing over of hostages over to the Zionist enemy, a fact acknowledged by the Red Cross. He wondered what prompted the Tyre incidents involving the brethren fighters of Islamic Resistance. He called upon the army's political leaders to explain the circumstances [surrounding the incidents] if they were true to their claims that they support the resistance and its continuance.

The remarks were made at a Friday sermon delivered by his eminence at the al-Imam al-Hadi mosque in al-Awza'i. He said, in part:

"God Almighty says in his glorious book: 'In the name of God, the compassionate and merciful.'

"Glory to God, who did take His Servant for a journey by night from the al-Haram mosque to the al-Aqsa mosque, whose precincts We did bless, in order that We might show him some of Our signs: for He is the one who heareth and seeth (all things).

"One of the miracles of the Messenger of God occurred this time of year, as he was taken on a Nocturnal Journey from al-Haram mosque in Makkah to the al-Aqsa mosque and noble Jerusalem.

"It is clear that the nocturnal journey and the midnight journey to the seven heavens took place before the Messenger emigrated to al-Madinah, i.e., during his Makkah era.

"As we said, that happening is considered one of the miracles of the Messenger of God because, in the course of a single night, the Messenger moved from Makkah to Jerusalem, and from there on a midnight journey to heaven, where he moved about the seven heavens then returned to Makkah—all in the course of one night. That definitely was no ordinary event. It was a miracle that the Messenger of God brought to his people. The two journeys are important, sensitive, and detailed segments in the history of Muslims, and especially in the annals of the Islamic call [da'wah] prior to the migration from Makkah to al-Madinah.

"That event embodies much meaning and connotation. It would be useful for each of us to read the details of this subject in its entirety, as narrated by our imams, may they have our prayers and a most profound peace.

Al-Haram, al-Aqsa Mosques Under Israeli Occupation

"On this, the anniversary of al-Isra' and al-Mi'raj, one feels much pain, sorrow, and sadness—nay, humiliation and shame, because the mosque from which the Messenger of God went on his nocturnal journey, and the mosque to which he went on his nocturnal journey are both—it is no exaggeration to say that both mosques are today under the control of the Jews, in the hands of the enemies of God, the enemies of Muhammad, the enemies of [His] messages and messengers.

"Those two noble and glorious mosques are under the control of the enemies of Islam, and not in the hands of Islam and the followers of Muhammad Bin-'Abdallah.

"We know about al-Aqsa mosque; it is in the despotic Zionist Jewish grip. The al-Haram mosque is in the hands of those chosen by the Jews and the English, imposed on the Arabian peninsula as princes, kings, and rulers and forced upon the Muslims by horrendous wars and massacres committed in the Arabian Peninsula against the peoples of that region and against the families and tribes that used to live there. The Al Sa'ud dynasty was fully empowered over that sacred land and over all Muslims in that region. They held themselves to be an Islamic state that rules under Islam and carries its banner. It would print God's book in expensive and valuable editions to be

distributed throughout the world. Its ruler and potentate describes himself as the servant of the two holy mosques and goes about distorting Islam in all manner—intellectually, doctrinally, and theoretically, as well as empirically and in practice, through many applications that are practiced in al-Hijaz in the name of Islam and in the name of Islamic jurisprudence [fiqh].

"The despicable dynasty that today rules the lands of Muslims in the Arabian Peninsula is implementing a plan, a strategy, and a course of sowing dissension among Muslims, stirring up doctrinal factionalism, and creating the artificial Wahhabi sect, which has no basis in Islam and whose objective and main concern is to repudiate the faith of Muslims of various sects. It is common knowledge that the Wahhabis repudiate not only the Shi'ites, but also many of the Sunnis who hold certain doctrinal beliefs or abide by certain rulings of Islamic jurisprudence.

"That Wahhabism, which Imam al-Khomeini—God have mercy on him—described as a sect invented by British intelligence agents, is essentially an English sect that has nothing to do with Islam. They brought it over and imposed it by the sword upon the people of the Arabian Peninsula. They then used their al-Wahhabite vantage to repudiate the faith of other Muslims of various sects. That dynasty that today rules in the name of Islam has dropped all pretenses.

"Ali used to say that whatever one attempts to hide, one will reveal by an expression or a slip of the tongue."

Conspiracy To Patriate the Palestinian Diaspora

"Today, thousands of Palestinians live in various Arab countries and a solution must be found in order to patriate them and naturalize them in order to solve their problem as refugees. The proposed solution to the Palestinian refugee problem, and the issue that was denied inclusion in the agenda of the Moscow negotiations—the proposed solution is not to return the refugees to their homeland, but to patriate them wherever they happen to be. This is totally unacceptable as far as we are concerned—not because our country is small and can not accommodate the Palestinians of the diaspora, and not because of Lebanese or patriotic beliefs or a nationalistic mindset. No, not at all!

"The Palestinians live in the lands of the Muslims and they are entitled to live and reside in the lands of the Muslims, but they must always think of returning to their homeland and country.

"A major and fundamental risk of patriation is that it may cause the dispersed immigrant Palestinian people to relinquish the cause of liberating Palestine and Jerusalem and returning to its homeland. Patriation is, therefore, not acceptable. It is up to the Palestinian people in the diaspora to reject such patriation and to confront all aspects of this wily conspiracy to keep them away from their homeland—nay, even to carve away that homeland formally and legally.

"Palestinians should continue to demand their rights and their land. The day when all Muslims of the world stand by them, as many Muslims today do—that day will inevitably come.

"The day when that usurping entity falls—that day will inevitably come. This land will be returned to its legitimate people. That is a divine promise and God is always true! All those homeless, tortured, persecuted refugees have to do is restore their faith in God and in themselves, re-examine their options, close their ranks again, and resolve to persist on their course regardless of the difficulty."

Lebanese Forces Are Israeli Pawn

"Another issue of concern is Israeli acknowledgement that a number of detainees and hostages held by the Lebanese Forces are now inside the occupied territories. That was confirmed by Amnesty International, which wrote the enemy's head of government demanding their release if—as the organization put it—they had not been involved in terrorist activity. The enemy responded that they indeed had.

"Our primary concern is that this fact has been confirmed with physical, material proof shortly after the Lebanese Government said it was closing the book on the hostages, since it had ascertained, through intelligence and investigation, that the Lebanese Forces no longer hold hostages.

"Then it turns out that a number of abductees are still held hostage and that the Lebanese Forces had handed them over to the Israeli enemy. That is the conclusion reached by the families of a number of hostages and detainees, whose status those families sought to ascertain. We do not know the fate of thousands of the kidnapped who are still missing in Lebanese Forces and Phalangist territories—are they still in jail? Still alive? Have they been done in or handed over to the Israeli enemy? That dossier must be reopened. The Lebanese Government, which previously announced that it had closed that file, must provide answers on the detainees, who turned out to be inside the occupied territories.

"Also in that regard, we would like to stand up and say to everyone in Lebanon that the search for Lebanese amity and the quest for true national harmony among all forces, sects, and factions in Lebanon must be rooted in letting go of the enemy and abandoning relations with it, acting on its behalf, and betting on it. Those who extend a hand to the Israeli enemy are not interested in harmony with the rest of the Lebanese. The Lebanese Forces remains an Israeli pawn and everyone is therefore asked to clarify his position on that organization in all areas, with the assumption that the Lebanese Forces remains a pawn for Israel."

We Ask State's Reasons Behind What Happened to Brethren at Tyre

"We in the south of Lebanon have repeatedly said that we are for law and order in this country, for peace and security in Lebanon, and for tranquility that would allow people to live their lives far from fighting, shootings, and petty wars.

"But we are also for bolstering the resistance and for embracing it and facilitating its activities. Those are fundamentals in which we believe, and we should not sacrifice one at the expense of the other. The maintenance of law and order is no excuse to impound the resistance, arrest its youths, conspire against it, and spy on its activities in the name of security. That would be no security for Lebanon but [security] for Israel. An effort such as this can only be meant to advance Israeli security. A serious incident took place a few days ago at Tyre. The people must know the facts. Officials and all those responsible must face up to their responsibilities from this moment on. The brethren at Mahallah al-Kharab in the cemetery at Tyre were washing the bodies [in preparation for burial] of two confrontation martyrs from the town of Sribbin. There were other brethren present, including brethren from [both] the leadership and the ranks of the resistance. [Also present was] a member of the political bureau. They were startled by troops and forces, and by a large armed, military presence of the soldiers and officers of the Lebanese Army's 10th Brigade. They tried to reason with them, but to no avail. They [the brigade] wanted to arrest the brethren. Words and blows were exchanged with the brethren. A number of brother officials present were arrested and led to a vehicle. There was heavy and dense shooting during the fracas. They also arrested a number of civilians who were present, but who had nothing to do with the resistance or with the martyrs. En route, the vehicle's [radio] operator reported that 'we have arrested the group that fights in Sribbin.' This, then, is where the problem lies.

"We challenge all officials responsible for that incident to prove that the brethren who were there made any mistake or created any problem that would justify such an offensive against them. On the contrary. They were washing the bodies of the two dear martyrs when the [troops] suddenly appeared to do their ugly deed and carry out their hostility.

"The sanctity of the mosque and of Friday restrains me from relating to you many of the serious details. The shootings and the arrest of the brethren meant that the bodies of the martyrs were left unattended all night, since nobody from that place dared come forward after that tremendous offensive by those [troops].

"Let us be frank. Those officers and soldiers of the 10th Brigade—did they take such action upon themselves or were they following orders? The former would mean that the militias still exist within the Lebanese Army.

"There is supposed to be an army—a military institution that acts within certain parameters and under certain political orders and directives. However, if they did what they did out of personal motives and convictions, then they have turned into a militia and not a military institution that carries the name of "institution."

"On the other hand, if they were following orders and directives, then this indicates an even greater danger, in that they say one thing and do another. We hear a lot of talk about embracing the resistance, defending it, and protecting the Lebanese people's right to resist. But things are different in actual practice.

"That incident coincided with another—the arrest of a brother fighter at a forward position. He was detained for several days despite efforts to secure his release—that is, if he were ever released! Why did he spend several days in jail? Why was he arrested in the first place, when he was on a mission of struggle at an advanced forward position? Those are facts for which we demand answers. If it is true what they say, that resistance is a basic and legitimate right of the Lebanese people, then why did that happen to the martyrs of the resistance? Who was to honor whose martyrs who burned the midnight oil in order to protect this country's gateways and who made the supreme sacrifice for this nation and those organizations?

"Peace be with you."

Formation of New Bloc Reported Under Way

92P40145A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 27 Feb 92
p 2

[Text] Beirut, AL-HAYAH—A number of political personalities and leaders from many regions, who form a nucleus for a broad political bloc, met at the home of former minister Joseph al-Hashim. Among those who attended the meeting, in addition to al-Hashim, were Deputy Pierre Dakdash, former minister Elie Salim, former deputies Qabalan 'Isa al-Khuri and Antoine al-Harawi, former secretary-general of the foreign ministry Ambassador Faruq Abi-al-Lama', Attorney Shakir Abu-Sulayman, and Engineer Henri Sufayr. Later on, they will be joined by a number of personalities who were not present at the first meeting because they were traveling.

It was learned that contacts are being made with a number of personalities to announce a political bloc which one of those attending the first meeting described as follows: "It will bring together the pick of those possessing courage, expertise, and mature political experience; and it will counter the state of despair and anxiety from which people are suffering as a result of frivolous attitudes and irresponsibility."

Al-Tufayli: Negotiations Ruined Arabs, Muslims

92AE0243B Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 7 Feb 92 p 8

[Article: "His Eminence Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli: We Will Not Enter al-Aqsa Mosque Until We Are God's Slaves; Negotiations With Enemy Ruined Muslims' Lands"]

[Text] His Eminence Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli said in his Friday sermon at the Amir al-Mu'minin [leader of the faithful] 'Ali Bin-Abi-Talib mosque, that the Messenger could not have journeyed to the heavens, had it not been for his servitude to God and his mounting love for Him, through which he progressed to positions of human advancement and perfection that were even more exalted than the inner circle of angels.

His Eminence also said that the Messenger's nocturnal journey and his entry into al-Aqsa mosque were only under the banner of servitude to God. That leads His Eminence to feel that we will not enter al-Aqsa mosque unless we are slaves to God.

We Will Enter al-Aqsa Mosque Only If We Are Slaves to God

"We will not enter al-Aqsa mosque until we are slaves to God. We wonder why we were unable to liberate Jerusalem or save Palestine. [The answer] is that we meant to do so without servitude to God. [Instead,] we attempted to salvage Jerusalem and Palestine by servitude to the devil. We created infidel countries and we were governed in our countries by infidel rulers.

"Those [rulers] cannot liberate our homelands. Neither our homelands nor Jerusalem will be liberated under the banner of socialism, nor will they be liberated under the banner of patriotism or nationalism."

His Eminence then alluded to the Tabuk invasion, recalling the general conditions that prevailed among Muslims, which differentiated the sincere from the deceitful, and the genuine from the fake. He related those conditions to contemporary times, especially since the Tabuk invasion was a milestone in the Messenger's movement, since it prompted him to declare a confrontation with Greece, a major power of those days. That announcement had a great impact within the Muslim community, and hence that differentiation.

The Prophet Turned Status Quo Into Glory for Islam

In that respect, His Eminence offered that "When we say today that we want to fight Israel and liberate our land, and this young man shoulders his rifle and takes off barefoot—we frequently visit our fighters much in the same manner as those who came to the Messenger of God weeping and crying to go to battle, but he couldn't help them in those matters.

"By contrast, there are those who attack the resistance and its fighters and jihad and its mujahidin because they are contemptuous. You want to fight Israel and march. March towards Jerusalem and fight, fight until victory, you who say 'Death to America.' Those are the hypocrites and are the descendants of 'Abdallah Bin-Sallul and his company, [while] the others are descended from the dutiful faithful whose eyes filled with anguished tears for not being able to join the Messenger of God in battle.

"Some people had to fall back because their mounts became incapacitated. The army is said to have been 30,000 strong, but other accounts put it at 70,000 fighters. It was a great army for the Messenger of God to conquer the Greeks.

"What difference does it make if they were conquered at al-Madinah or in their homeland? Very high morale. The Greeks, therefore, withdrew when they learned of the Messenger's army and its equipment. They were making ready to attack al-Madinah, but then they withdrew.

"And now my brothers—were the Messenger of God among us today, I believe he would do what he did then. But, to our great sorrow, the Jews of my homeland go to Moscow and elsewhere to kiss the feet of the imperialists.

"Shame and dishonor on all of them. Do not listen to, or heed, or accept phrases and words that talk of the need to

pacify Israel, submit to America, and accept the status quo. Your prophet did not accept the status quo. Your prophet turned the status quo into glory for Islam."

We Must Be Protective of Faith, Religion

"Many hypocrites failed to march with the Messenger of God. Some faithful used to say: 'If they had joined us they would have increased our number and added to our strength.' The Holy Koran says that 'If they had come out with you, they would [not have added to your (strength)] but only made for disorder' [Koran 9:47].

"This means that the presence of hypocrites among us, my brothers, contributes weakness rather than strength. We must therefore be protective of the faith, protective of religion, and protective of piety. This is essential.

"The Messenger of God marches with this distressed army to confront the largest power in the world. A few years later, the major powers fell to the control of Muslims."

Negotiations Ruined Lands of Muslims

"Today, what have Arab rulers accomplished in Moscow? What have they accomplished?

"We said in the past that those negotiations were not negotiations; that those negotiations would not be productive; and that those negotiations would fulfill the century-long aspirations of the Jews and imperialists. We said that those negotiations would mean losses for Palestine, losses for Lebanon, losses for Syria and Jordan, losses for Egypt, and losses for all Arab and Islamic countries, not only for Palestine.

"Those negotiations have ruined not only Palestine, but also the Arab and Muslim world. Today, we have not saved Palestine, but rather pressed the rest of the countries of Muslims, just as Palestine, into the service of Israel and of the Americans. Instead of liberating Palestine and freeing it from imperialist control, we pressed our country into the service of the imperialists, just as Palestine.

"What have the Arabs accomplished at the negotiations? Some would say that, unfortunately, nothing was accomplished. You have realized all the objectives of these negotiations. In order to recognize that you failed, we must first identify the objectives targeted at the negotiations.

"Did those negotiations target the liberation of Palestine? Did they aim at restoring justice to the Palestinian people? Was the objective to salvage the Golan [Heights] and others? Those were not objectives of the negotiations. Ask Bush. He clearly stated that the negotiations [targeted] real peace, and by real peace I mean diplomatic, economic, cultural, and commercial relations.

"Ask Shamir about real negotiations and their objectives. They never mentioned that there was a Palestinian people whose rights we wish to give back. This is why we ask: Did those negotiations accomplish their objectives? Yes, they accomplished their American-Israeli objective. They accomplished their objective 100 percent.

"It is all over now. The cause is no more. Didn't we negotiate the Palestinian cause for 40 years? Didn't wars break out in the name of Palestine? [Aren't] negotiations held today over the Palestinian problem? I pose a simple question to the multilateral conference in Moscow. Why was the Palestinian people item scratched off the conference agenda? The Palestinian cause is the pivotal issue around which the conference is held. The Palestinian cause is absent from the conference. On the agenda are water and petroleum, development, imperialism, and everything else that serves the interests of America and Israel.

"The Arabs did not enter into negotiations with the enemy. Let us call a spade a spade. Arab rulers wanted, by this issue, to [legitimize] their relations with the Israeli enemy and bring them out into the open.

"That is what they wanted and that is what they accomplished. That charade, therefore, represented a total victory for the American and Israeli enemy. A victory in the full sense of the word, and not, as some would say, that we emerged with empty-handed."

The Resistance Will Persist

"We say, along with the Messenger of God, that the march will continue; The course of Islamic resistance will be completed. This resistance—which sometimes consists of a few youths engaging the enemy here and there—this resistance will grow into a giant to be reckoned with and will become a banner from one end of the Islamic nation to another. This rifle will become a sweeping torrent. We are confident that it will inevitably liberate Jerusalem, not matter how long it takes."

Resistance Has Become Conscience of Nation

"Attempts by Algerian rulers—such appointing mosque imams, inhibiting prayer, arresting people, killing—such attempts, God willing, will end in failure. The spark will emanate from Algeria to the remaining countries and then all will suffer defeat and flee, and the banner of Islam will be raised. You will see how victorious Islam can be.

"A few days ago, AL-DIYAR newspaper printed an interview with Jamilah Bouhrik. Most of you don't know her and never heard of her. Jamilah, in her day, had a fine name and reputation because she fought the infidel French imperialist with great valor and was jailed and tortured. The hearts of all fighters went out to her.

"In the interview, Jamilah said she wished she were young again in order to join the Hizballah youths in their resistance. Her dream is to join you in the resistance.

"You have become the conscience of the nation. You have become the dream of young and old who would like to join you in this resistance."

Lebanese Regime Readies Army Strike Against the Resistance

"I am not saying this just to raise your morale. You will see this clearly if you read the Koran. This resistance is targeted by many, my brothers, and many in Lebanon wish it harm.

"All those who are not of the resistance wish it harm, [including], of course, the Lebanese regime and its army. I do not mean individual soldiers, because in the Armed Forces are many of our brothers and our youths, who aspire to contribute their lives to the battle against the Israeli enemy.

"Rather, I mean the commanders of that army, meaning the political leadership. Those have no purpose in Lebanon except to fight the resistance and Hizballah. Let us talk plainly. A heroic operation took place yesterday—a great and glorious confrontation between resistance youths in the south and the Israeli army. Two were martyred during this great confrontation, which the enemy acknowledged, conceding the valor of resistance youths.

"Instead of coming over to salute the martyrs, glorify them, decorate them, and look after their families and their orphans, if any, the regime sent its soldiers to defile the remains of the martyrs.

"They desecrate a martyr and write the newspapers quoting some traveler from the south, as if Hizballah is ashamed of its martyrs and therefore buries them in the dark of night.

"When was Hizballah ever afraid? We value our martyrs, rejoice in our martyrs, and celebrate our martyrs. Every one of us wishes to be martyred, but the slyness of this regime, the Israeliness of this regime, the Jewishness of this regime—this is it. They came, they searched, and they did all the harm they could in the hope of provoking your brethren. They arrested some leaders—beat them up and arrested them. They fired their weapons, mocked the prophets, and blasphemed against God. Some of them said they were drunk—capable of doing anything, in other words. They threatened and terrorized.

"Do not be deluded, my brothers. I tell you plainly and clearly: Do not be misled. The Lebanese regime is getting its army ready. They are preparing, but they have no enemy except those who profess that there is no God but God. They have no desire to fight the Israeli enemy, or the Americans, or the French, or any imperialist.

"That army is being made ready solely for the purpose of fighting you. To be more exact, I swear by God the Almighty that they entertain no other thought."

We Must Turn People Into Resistance

"In order to frustrate the regime's objective of fighting the resistance and fighting the faithful, we must turn the entire Lebanese people into a resistance. We must turn men and women, young and old, into a Hizballah, so that it [the regime] would have to face them if it sought a confrontation.

"For instance, if the regime came to beat up on a youth, it could claim that one youth was bearing arms or that another did such-and-such, and people would believe it. But if the regime came to beat up on a shaykh—I mean a man of religion, not a senior citizen—then you would realize that the regime is fighting religion. The regime is fighting the Koran. In other words, it is colliding with the

people. If the regime wanted to enter a mosque and perpetrate a crime against worshippers, it will then face the wrath of the people and the masses.

"The defense of Islam and of the resistance requires packing the mosques. If we wish to defend Islam and protect the resistance, we must fill our mosques with worshippers and the faithful. The more we expand collective prayers in our mosques in order to spill into the streets, the more we are able to defend the course of Islam and the course of the Koran. The weaker the push towards prayers, towards the mosques, and towards faith, the better able our enemy to vanquish us.

"There is a great difference, therefore, between prayer at home and collective prayer in a mosque. Prayer in a mosque is a closing of ranks behind the Prophet in the defense of right. Prayer at home does not connote that meaning. Prayer in a mosque is expressive of the power of Islam, but prayer at home does not have that meaning.

"Furthermore, there is great deal to be gained when all Muslims get out on Fridays and other days to listen to sermons and political discourses, etc., and turn into one body with one mind, one understanding, and one objective.

"No nation would then be able to shunt you aside and no conspirator would be able to hurt you or harm you, or desecrate the bodies of martyrs at the cemetery, fire at members of the resistance, or make arrests.

"You are aware that the jails of this inauspicious regime hold some of our youths, who were taken from sites where they were confronting the Israeli enemy. The regime wants to make all of Lebanon similar to the occupied [Gaza] strip. We want all of Lebanon to be free like the towns liberated by the resistance.

"Brothers, you are facing a major confrontation. The infidel West, Israel, and the Arab rulers who are at peace with the Israeli enemy are making ready throughout the Islamic world. Get ready to fill your mosques!"

MAURITANIA

Tuaregs Reportedly Dying of Hunger in Camps

92AF0560A Paris LE MONDE in French 28 Feb 92 p 6

[Article signed C.S.: "Mauritania: Coming From Neighboring Mali, Thousands of Tuaregs Are Threatened by Famine"]

[Text] "The refugees are dying, not in hundreds, but in thousands. If we want to be able to go on speaking of the Tuareg people, we must act very fast. It is a matter of hours!" The head of Caritas-Mauritania, Father Francois Lefort, surrounded by officials from Doctors of the World (MDM) and the Catholic Relief Agency, did not mince his words at a press conference, Monday 24 February, in Paris, when he denounced the tragedy suffered in recent weeks by 30,000 to 35,000 refugees from Mali—Moors but mostly Tuaregs—in the eastern tip of Mauritania.

Fleeing the drought as much as the insecurity that have prevailed in northern Mali for the past few months, these

civilian populations sought refuge in Mauritania already at the end of May 1991. With the start of the dry season, their situation quickly went from bad to worse.

At the Bassi-Kounou camp, where some 200 families (i.e., about 10,000 people) have settled, "over 1,000 people have died since 23 May," according to Father Lefort. The same is true of the refugees of the Fassala-Nere camp, where another 200 families have gathered. "Since May, 843 people have died, 213 of them between December 1991 and February 1992." As for the third camp, at Aghor, where there are nearly 750 families, the total "exceeds 400 dead."

In addition to the lack of food and the plague of epidemics—measles and whooping cough carry off some 30 people every day according to Dr. Francois Morin of MDM—there is the water shortage. For instance, the 10,000 refugees of Fassala-Nere have only two wells to ensure their survival. With the dry season coming, these may be dry "by April," according to the French physician.

The present situation, already "disastrous" according to Father Lefort, is however not without remedy. "The money is there; the food is there!" the head of Caritas-Mauritania claimed, blaming the lack of progress on the bureaucracy of international organizations. "To forward the stocks stored in Nouakchott, all it takes is a few signatures. But the person who must sign is currently... on maternity leave!" he added with a bitter smile.

Emergency programs are "unwieldy operations that can be managed efficiently only by the States and by international organizations," the general secretary of the Catholic Relief Organization, Mr. Denis Vienot, pointed out. In the case of Mauritania, it seems obvious that both are incompetent. Until now, nongovernmental organizations have been reduced to attending to the most urgent cases first: pulling the alarm bell and "driving ambulances." An MDM team should go on location already this week, and the High Commissioner in charge of Refugees (HCR) is to provide vehicles and medicine.

Interest in Closer Ties To Italy Reported

92AF0593A Nouakchott HORIZONS in French 27-28 Feb 92 p 12

[Unattributed article: "The Head of State Receives a High-Level Italian Official: New Opportunities Opening Up for Cooperation Between Mauritania and Italy"]

[Text] At an audience early yesterday afternoon Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, the chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation [CMSN], the head of state, received Mr. Bruno Bottai, the secretary general of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The audience took place with Mr. Khattri Ould Jiddou, the secretary general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and Mr. Mohamed Mahmoud Ould Mohamed Vall, the director of the European department of the same ministry, in attendance.

Upon leaving the audience, Mr. Bottai told the national press that he was honored by the audience granted to him by the head of state.

He next stated that since Mauritania's independence the two countries have had excellent cooperative and friendly relations.

These relations, he said, will become stronger and will expand in the future, especially since new opportunities have now opened up. The Italian official then praised the democratic climate that has been established in Mauritania and the role played by our country on the international scene, particularly at the level of international organizations and the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA].

Mr. Bottai also emphasized the necessity of strengthening the dialogue between the UMA and the EEC countries bordering the Mediterranean as part of the "five plus five" dialogue.

He emphasized that he had informed the head of state and the Mauritanian officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy's wish to see this dialogue strengthened.

Last, Mr. Bottai stated his country's determination to strengthen its cooperation with Mauritania, particularly in economic areas.

We should point out that Mr. Bottai has been in our country since Tuesday afternoon on a working visit and that yesterday morning he had discussions with several high-level officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

Thus Mr. Khattry Ould Jiddou had a working meeting yesterday morning with the Italian delegation.

The meeting focused on cooperation between Mauritania and Italy particularly in the economic and political areas and also on the need to give impetus to and to strengthen this cooperation in accordance with the well-understood interests of the two parties.

A well-informed source at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation told AGENCE MAURITANIENNE DE L'INFORMATION [AMI] that the two parties aim to set up organized economic and political consultations, which will be the proper framework for the functioning of bilateral relations in the mutual interest of the two countries.

For his part, Mr. Bottai said yesterday afternoon that the discussions he had had in Nouakchott had generally been fruitful.

In a statement to AMI shortly before leaving Nouakchott at the end of a 48-hour visit to our country, the Italian official observed that his country attaches great importance to strengthening its relations with Mauritania both on a bilateral basis and as part of the UMA.

He added that Mauritania currently occupies a select position, which makes her an honorable partner enjoying great credibility at the international level. Italy is thus very interested in establishing solid links with this country.

Mr. Bottai subsequently emphasized that in the very near future his country intends to accredit a resident ambassador in Nouakchott, because the level of relations and the new opportunities that have opened up since the end of the Cold war require solid cooperation between the two countries to strengthen their relations.

Furthermore he referred to the dialogue that has been initiated between the UMA countries and the five European countries bordering the Mediterranean, a dialogue in which Mauritania and Italy can play a major role.

Japanese Aid Proposed for Health Sector

92AF0593B Nouakchott HORIZONS in french
27-28 Feb 92 p 12

[Unattributed article: "A Japanese Health Delegation in Nouakchott"]

[Text] Relations between Mauritania and Japan are experiencing a major impetus in various fields.

It was as part of this [impetus] that on Tuesday the Japanese Government sent a major delegation to Mauritania composed of physicians, specialists, and engineers to discuss with Mauritanian officials our country's situation with regard to health and to define those areas in which the Japanese Government can provide assistance in financing vital health projects in Mauritania. The Japanese delegation is headed by Mr. Shuzo Kanajawa, whose is in charge of international cooperation at the Japanese Health Center.

Yesterday morning the delegation held a series of discussions with the secretaries general of the Ministries of Health and Social Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, and Planning. At these meetings, Mauritanian officials supplied the Japanese delegation with general information on where the country stands with regard to health and they also gave an update to the information already supplied by Mauritania to Japan regarding certain areas for which Mauritania hopes to obtain financing.

Those areas are ambulances, emergency national insurance benefits, and cooperation in health care, a spokesman at the Ministry of Health told AGENCE MAURITANIENNE DE L'INFORMATION.

QATAR

Insurance Company Posts Gains for 1991

92AE0251A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 1 Feb 92 p 9

[Interview with Khalifah al-Subay'i, general manager of Qatar Insurance Company, by Hasan Abu-'Arafat, place and date not given: "Qatari Shareholding Companies' 1991 Financial Results, 1992 Plans; Khalifah al-Subay'i: '1991 Excellent Year for Company Performance Despite Economic Stagnation Difficulties;' 45.3 Million Net Profits, 135.8 Million Premiums; 36.18 Million Increased Investments"]

[Text] The Qatar Insurance Company continued its excellent financial performance in 1991, achieving its highest level of premiums and profits ever, up 13.35 percent over

1990. Net profits amounted to 45.3 million [Qatari] riyals, a 24.6 percent increase. Investments leapt to 326.59 million riyals. The company, which was formed in 1964, would like to direct the largest portion of these investments towards the local market. Last year was an excellent year for all financial and technical activities. Mr. Khalifah 'Abdallah al-Subay'i spoke very openly with AL-SHARQ about 1991 results and 1992 plans and programs. The details of this interview follow:

[Abu-'Arafat] How do you assess the company's performance during 1991 and the financial results that were achieved?

[al-Subay'i] 1991 was a record year for Qatar Insurance Company. We achieved the highest level of premiums and profits in the entire history of the company. Our 1991 premiums amounted to 135.8 million riyals, a 13.35 percent increase over 1990. Net profits for the same year amounted to 45.3 million riyals, an increase of 24.6 percent over the same period. We also realized large increases in investments and our cash position. Investments for 1991 amounted to 326.59 million riyals, a rise of 36.18 million riyals over 1990, despite the turmoil and disturbances in financial markets and the accompanying sharp decline in interest rates, especially for the dollar.

In short, 1991 can be considered an excellent year for Qatar Insurance Company in all financial and technical activities, crowning five outstanding years of progress and success unprecedented in the insurance industry in the entire Gulf area. This was achieved despite the region's economic stagnation. Such outstanding success deserves praise at a time when other companies are going through large-scale retrenchment.

[Abu-'Arafat] What are the most important priorities and programs for 1992?

[al-Subay'i] Our most important priority for this or any year is for the company to continue to work hard to stay permanently in the vanguard of regional insurance companies and to keep premium subscriptions and profits at their highest levels without infringing on the excellent levels of service we provide our clients. Moreover, a large portion of our investments will be directed locally into whatever national projects will boost the country's economy. Profits will be distributed to shareholders in the following manner: 25 percent as cash profit; 25 percent as free shares.

[Abu-'Arafat] How do you view the insurance market in Qatar at present?

[al-Subay'i] The insurance market in Qatar is small and limited in comparison with global insurance markets or some Arab markets. The Qatar market is inevitably affected by stagnation and turmoil in world markets because we are a part of them.

[Abu-'Arafat] What are your recommendations for developing the market and creating honorable competition among companies?

[al-Subay'i] Coordination, consultation, and setting certain fundamentals and principles among companies to govern how they deal in the market; Then competition would be constructive and honorable.

[Abu-'Arafat] Are insurance rates for automobiles, especially compulsory insurance, well-tailored to economic variables and increased risk?

[al-Subay'i] In general, auto insurance rates are not well-tailored to the size of risk and economic variables. As a result, there has been a remarkable increase in spare parts prices and the costs of repair. Rates can be divided into two sections:

1. Comprehensive insurance, with rates that are rather reasonable, but which are small when compared with other countries such as Europe; They are determined by age group and social status of the insured, as well as by vehicle make and power, cash value, and year of manufacture.

2. Liability insurance, which is what we call compulsory; Rates for this type of insurance were set by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They are very nominal and inappropriate for the risks they cover, which include cost of repairs, indemnification for blood money and injuries to other parties. We tried to raise these rates, but we were not successful.

[Abu-'Arafat] Some feel that market conditions and variables call for a reorganization of the insurance companies.

[al-Subay'i] What do you mean by reorganization? In what way? We at Qatar Insurance Company have the most modern management systems in the world. In cooperation with the consulting firm of Touche Ross, we reorganized our company in 1987. We have the latest mainframe computers, and we possess managerial and technical expertise.

[Abu-'Arafat] Is it true that the insurance market in Qatar has become a routine operation that has neither changed nor evolved over many long years?

[al-Subay'i] Insurance work has never been routine. The insurance industry is continually evolving. Every day new risks appear because of the swift development of societies. These must be covered by new provisions and policies. The insurance industry is based on the purely scientific principles of studying risks and probabilities, calculating rates, and so on. This in turn is reflected in the Qatar marketplace and any other insurance markets, i.e., insurance now covers nearly all aspects of life. We at Qatar Insurance Company have used scientific technology and the computer in all of our activities.

Was the insurance market in Qatar of the sixties, seventies and eighties the same as it is today? No. Remarkable and major change has occurred in the insurance industry in Qatar, staying abreast of every development in global insurance markets.

[Abu-'Arafat] Is competition among the companies based on offering good services or on rates, in your view?

[al-Subay'i] True competition has to be based on offering good services to the customers, not on rates. What good is rate competition if a customer cannot find the service he needs? We, for example, raised our auto insurance rates, yet the number of our customers grew. Why? Because of the excellent service we offer them.

[Abu-'Arafat] How do you view Qatar Insurance Company's presence at the Gulf level?

[al-Subay'i] Qatar Insurance Company has a strong presence at the Gulf level. Its branch in Dubayy enjoys an excellent reputation and venerable status in United Arab Emirates' markets. We have also been in charge of a group of insurance companies in the Gulf for two of the largest shipping fleets in Kuwait for a number of years: AMPTC [Arab Maritime Petroleum Transport Company] and UASC [United Arab Shipping Company]. At the time, we had to face powerful competition from insurance companies in Kuwait. Our policy for the future is to have a distinguished presence in all Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries by 1994.

[Abu-'Arafat] Lloyd's reported that it lost more than one billion dollars. What has been the impact of that on the domestic insurance market?

[al-Subay'i] Yes, this is true. We, of course, are part of the world market, so inevitably this will be reflected locally.

[Abu-'Arafat] What do you think of the idea of merging domestic insurance companies into a single company that would be able to compete?

[al-Subay'i] There are three national insurance companies. Were they to merge into a single company, the spirit of development and competition would disappear. Simply put, this would mean predetermined rates imposed on the insurance-buying public and a lack of concern for the level of services provided to them.

As for foreign competition, coordination and consultation will overcome all obstacles, God willing.

SUDAN

Conference on World Islamic Economy Hosted

To Counter New World Order

92AF0564A Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic Feb 29 92 p 5

[Text] We have sought the views of some of the conference participants on the effects of world developments on the growth of the "Islamic economy" and the doubts raised about it. The speakers stressed that Islamic economy would be the way out of problems under application of Islamic law [shari'ah].

Obstructing Developing Countries

Dr. 'Adil al-Mahdi says the new world order aims at obstructing the advancement of developing countries and blocking their path to progress and development. The aim is also to keep them in a state of subordination, thus forcing the developing countries to remain backward,

something that is difficult to explain. "The Arab world," he added, "is preoccupied with a difficult problem, which is that of development. The real problem is how to exploit all the available resources. If the Arab and Islamic countries can overcome the problem of exploiting their resources, then it would become possible for them to achieve greater progress, and the question of development in the Arab world would become a simple problem if we look at it from the angle of proper exploitation of resources."

Response to Doubts

Referring to doubts expressed about the experiment of Islamic economy, Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam said, "The skeptics claim that there has long been no practical economic model to be followed, which, in their view, means that the Islamic system's basic principles are inapplicable. This is not true, because since its inception, the Islamic state has been applying the principles of shari'ah in economic transactions, though these transactions may not have been defined as an Islamic economy. Also, in 1924, the Arab nation brought about the downfall of the Islamic caliphate [as published]. Attempts have since been made to alienate the Muslims from their systems and from the principles that are derived from Islamic shari'ah, thus creating a deficiency in application.

"One of the objections voiced was that the experiment of Islamic banks failed in many countries. Though this view is legitimate, it is inaccurate. The contemporary experiment less than 20 years old. Like any other new experiment, it has its positive and negative aspects. Governments in many Islamic countries raised many obstacles, but thanks to the call for the application of shari'ah and the exclusion of usurious banks from Islamic economic life, the experiment will succeed. Perhaps the most important thing that the application of an Islamic economy could achieve would be getting rid of illegitimate things, such as trading in liquor, drugs, and women. Those who deal in these things have their own pressure groups, from which they benefit. They stand in the way of any effective application of shari'ah and Islamic economy."

The Islamic Solution

Dr. 'Abdallah al-Shaykh says "The doubts being raised about the application of the Islamic economy are based on the claim that it is difficult to implement, it is idealistic, and that there is no model to be followed. The thinkers and scholars should go back to the glory days of Islam. The lack of practical solutions and adequate efforts on the part of the scholars weakens conviction. The clouded thoughts of the decisionmakers are due to external factors represented in the absence of an ideology countering the Western ideology, hence weakening the position of the economic experts. In the Arab homeland, man manages the institutions and the political and economic organizations and, therefore, he is the basis of development. If no man adhering to Islamic teachings exists, then there will be no development. The economic and political developments have been a disaster that befell society, since the United States and the West have established their authority over

the rest of the peoples, in addition to tightening their control on its [the Arab nation's] resources. This, in turn, influences social and individual behavior, and therefore is contrary to the objectives of the desired development."

Need Islamic Common Market

92AF0564B Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 19 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam has called for the establishment of an Islamic common market within the context of Islamic unity. He pointed out that the 12th Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic Countries, held in November 1980, issued a resolution to establish an Islamic common market, encourage joint Islamic projects, and initiate the implementation of a program for the liberalization of trade, in order to achieve stronger cooperation between the Islamic states.

He characterized the common market as an economic bloc comprising independent states and constituting a source of strength and total integration in an economic unit. It guarantees lifting restrictions on the movement of commodities and services, the transfer of capital and technology, and dealing with the outside world on the basis of a standard tariff.

He listed the advantages of common market: the formation of a fourth [world] market, including 46 Islamic states; creating positive advantages; and designating specializations, dividing labor, reducing prices, and developing the Islamic states.

Referring to the elements of unity and the unionist thought, he stressed that unity is one of the political, economic, and social components in Islam, and that Muslim thinkers have already advocated the idea of a united Islamic state.

He said the way to establish a common market is to standardize legislation; pursue the method of joint projects and partial integration; encourage trade and economic cooperation; take studied steps toward opening the labor market to all individuals in the Islamic states; lift the ban that states impose on the freedom of movement and transfer; strengthen the Islamic Conference Organization, and support the resolutions it has adopted to establish an Islamic common market.

List of Papers Presented

92AF0564C Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 19 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] Working papers which the World Islamic Economic Conference will discuss today are as follows:

- "Toward an Islamic Common Market," by Dr. Ja'far 'Abd-al-Salam.
- "Stages of Social Insurance in Light of Contemporary Needs," by Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Yusri.
- "Production Relations in the Agricultural Sector," by Professor Muhammad Hashim 'Awad.
- "Work Relations in the Islamic Regime," by 'Abd-al-Rahman Haydub.

- "The Stock Market," by Dr. Ahmad Muhi-al-Din.
- "The Islamic State and Political Intervention in the Economy," by Dr. Hasan al-Sa'uri.
- "Morality of Transactions in the Islamic Regime," by Dr. Ahmad 'Ali.
- "The General Creativity Plan and the Universality of the Economic Theory," by Dr. Muhammad al-Hasan.

Conference Highlights

92AF0564D Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 20 Feb 92 p 1

[Article by Raqiyah Abu Shawk]

[Text] The Islamic Economic Conference organized by Omdurman University will conclude its work today and issue its final recommendations. The conference discussed a number of papers yesterday.

Discussing the paper he submitted, Dr. Muhammad Hashim 'Awad called for the need for agricultural reform based on Islamic principles and to establish authorities to study projects and issue legislation for their liberalization. He told the participants that Sudan is an agricultural country that depends on agriculture as the main source [of income]. He said land holdings differ from one area to another, and stressed the need to review production relations with regard to property ownership and the principles defining land ownership, relations with the farmers, and the need to Islamize land regulations within the Islamic law that says "the land belongs to whoever reclaims it."

The conference heard a paper about stocks in the Islamic system, presented by Dr. Ahmad Muhi-al-Din, in which he said that stocks have contributed to the developed countries' advance from backwardness to growth and progress, stressing that the legal structure has enabled these countries to reach this level.

The participants stressed the need for savings to be free of risks in order to promote the spirit of owning productive things, to adhere to sound economic policies toward investments, to promote citizens' partnership, and to be open toward the rest of the markets in order to achieve satisfactory results.

Discussions affirmed that the stock market must be the means to build savings and to direct them toward productive and effective projects that would contribute to basing the stocks on sound principles of knowledge and fairness.

Al-Turabi Interviewed, Visited, Admired

Responds to Accusations

92AF0575A Cairo AL-SUDAN in Arabic 27 Feb 92
pp 1, 2

[Article: "Al-Turabi Attacks Egypt Again, Claims Spy for Egyptian Security Has Been on Trial"]

[Text] Hasan al-Turabi spoke to the BBC in his capacity as the *de facto* ruler of Sudan.

He claimed that the entire Sudanese opposition is resident in Egypt and has its own newspapers and conferences.

He discussed the use of military force against Sudan, saying that it is directed by Sudanese who are Cairo residents, who are inevitably accorded protection, and of whose activities Egyptian security forces must be aware.

Al-Turabi equivocated, as usual, when asked if any security apparatus at the border has indeed apprehended armed individuals who arrived to engage in terrorist activity.

He claimed that, at the recent trial of coup conspirators, one of the defendants was a spy for Egyptian security and was deeply involved in funding operations and making contacts via the security apparatus' diplomatic pouch, rather than the general diplomatic pouch.

Al-Turabi continued his allegations that Sudan opted to conceal this matter by shrouding the trials in secrecy. He added that the story is commonly known since the parties involved appeared on Sudanese television and in the Sudanese media.

Al-Turabi also alleged that the individual in question has been sentenced to prison and is now serving his sentence.

Asked why the secret trial proceedings were never broadcast or published, al-Turabi again hedged, saying that the objective was to downplay the security aspect in order not to affect Egyptian-Sudanese relations. He, however, gave out the man's initials, and said that parts of the trial [proceedings] have been released, even though Egypt wanted to receive the full text of his testimony in court.

The shaykh of the [National] Islamic Front persisted in his allegations that "the Sudanese have always maintained that exported ideas and revolutions came to us from Egypt; that communism and the Muslim Brotherhood came to us from Egypt; that Nasirism came to us from Egypt, and that Sudan never opted to respond in kind when certain entities in Egypt subjected it to sharp propaganda campaigns; and that Egypt is host to all Sudanese opposition [leaders] while Sudan does not shelter a single Egyptian of the opposition." When one member of the Egyptian opposition was forced by Egypt Air to transit Sudan to a third country, the people of Egypt went wild because 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman was in transit for two days at Khartoum Airport!

Al-Turabi claimed that his terrorist government will not allow the country to be used for terrorism and that the American Government was misguided in believing that Sudan harbors terrorism.

He described his position as free from [bonds to] other Arab countries. He said that a few hundred Palestinians reside in Sudan, but that none of them has any connection to terrorism; that the Sudanese Government will not close its doors to Palestinians expelled from the Gulf or from the occupied territories; and that Sudan's amicable relations with Iran should not interfere with its friendly relations with Arab countries.

Receives Iranians, Others

92AF0575B Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 26 Feb 92 p 1

[Article: "Al-Turabi Receives Foreign Delegations to Opening Session of TNA"]

[Text] Dr. Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, secretary general of the Arab and Islamic Peoples' Conference, received at his offices yesterday delegations from Iran, Syria, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, and Britain. The delegations were attending the opening sessions of the Transitional National Assembly [TNA].

Ibrahim al-Sanusi, assistant secretary general for foreign affairs, said in a statement to AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH that the Iranian delegation, headed by the vice chairman of the Consultative Council, discussed the close relations between the two countries with Dr. al-Turabi.

He added that the Syrian delegation, headed by the chairman of the National Council, elucidated to the conference's secretary general on Syria's position on the Middle East peace talks.

The chairman of the Palestine National Council expressed his country's appreciation for Sudan's positions on the Palestinian issue.

The secretary-general's meeting with the Iraqi delegation, headed by the minister of higher education, touched on the amicable relations between the two countries. The Jordanian delegation expressed the interest of various Jordanian entities in the activities of the Arab and Islamic Peoples' Conference.

Dr. al-Turabi also received a British House of Commons delegation of both Conservative and Labor parties. Mr. al-Sanusi described the meeting as frank and said it discussed the progression of the conflict in southern Sudan, especially the roles played by Britain and the imperialists.

The delegation was also apprised of forthcoming political restructuring.

Praised in Commentary

92AF9575C Khartoum AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH
in Arabic 28 Feb 92 p 8

[Commentary by Abu-Ma'ali]

[Text] A man is what he stands for. A man is also an intellect. Dr. Hasan al-Turabi combines both. It is no wonder, then, that he remains intellectually singular and a giant.

They dub him a terrorist. I wish they could know the humanity that assembles in his presence, his taste, and his longing for a world awash with peace and security. They say that he is an extremist, forgetting that a man of faith is simple and kind.

Dr. al-Turabi is a traveller on God's path, and that is his choice in faith, with which he never compromised nor abandoned. His face, which reflects decades of bitter

patience and great responsibility, is constantly bright with a perennial smile, regardless of fatigue, trauma, and the din of his enemies.

He is a first-rate son of his country [ibn balad] who is humble, unpretentious, and enamored of the glory of Islam. He knows no vacillation and accepts no defeat. His intellectual universe is unbounded. In politics he is both smart and cunning, and in religion he is a decisive sword.

Unfailingly and without falter, he has devoted his life to his country and to the faith of his people. He is, especially now, in the mind of all the West and is a person of contention.

That man, as far as I am concerned, is God's gift to this country, and his efforts would have born fruit had the leadership of the Salvation Revolution taken the side of Islam.

Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi called for Islamic revival, and Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani mapped out an Islamic republic, but both failed because they mixed politics with religion.

Sudan is about to enter a crossroads of civilization and yet the [above-mentioned] two gentlemen have not yet seen fit to join the sacred march and have not recognized that the support of Islam is preferred a thousand times over power, pacifity, and liberal democracy!

I am captivated by patriotic stands and am comforted when I come across an ambitious young man. Muhammad 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Hamshari is an example of ambitious patriotic youths. He is always rooting for Sudan. and his brain sifts a thousand plans. He is an artist and intellectual who helped formulate all the ornamental touches that have adorned Khartoum recently.

He knows no prejudice and speaks not of politics. His dream is for this people to work on propelling Sudan forward.

He is now holed up in an undistinguished Khartoum office frequented by friends who wish to partake of hope. He has within him the antidote to despair, and he utilizes it to wash away the worry of others. How we need people like him in the annals of public endeavor!

Goodness is a rare commodity these days. It is taken by some of us as a sign of weakness or of naivete. We need millions of good people. Those who would antagonize them are the enemies of life and beauty. A good person is beloved by God.

SYRIA

Writer Urges More Pluralism, Democracy

JN1703152592 Damascus *TISHRIN in Arabic*
9 Mar 92 p 10

[Article by Ya'qub Karru, member of the Political Bureau of the Syrian Communist Party]

[Text] The 8th of March was an important historical milestone and a turning point in the economic, social, and

political development of the country. The best way to celebrate such an event is by objectively and responsibly evaluating the march that started with this event, and by making a comprehensive criticism that reviews the accomplishments of this march, the difficulties it faced, and the correction and rectification of this march as necessitated by experience in order to meet the requirements of development and respond to the ambitions of the masses and their determination to forge ahead.

The solid foundation for a firm national and pan-Arab policy was established and entrenched over almost three decades. This policy is based on defending the homeland's sovereignty and dignity, reinforcing national independence, increasing self-reliance, and confronting imperialist and Zionist conspiracies against the issues and interests of the Arab nation. The Armed Forces have been constantly developed as an impregnable fort and a basic pillar for this policy, which was reinforced by strong relations with anti-imperialist powers and by principled solidarity with various national liberation movements in the world.

Within the complex and difficult international circumstances that accompanied and followed the collapse of the socialist bloc and the dismantling of the Soviet Union, and amid the serious events through which the region has lived, especially during the Gulf war, the Syrian policy, very prudently headed by President Hafiz al-Asad, has shown a great ability to deal with these variables and events with awareness, flexibility, and a principled policy. Syria has thus avoided the traps set for it and continued to adhere to constants and basic principles.

Syria has dealt and still is dealing with the current peace negotiations with such a principled policy, flexibility, and firmness without any illusions. It participated in these negotiations because it considered them an arena of struggle and a battle that should be waged in order to confirm the justness of Arab rights, expose Israel's aggressive and expansionist nature and claims to the broadest circle of world public opinion so that it will be condemned and held primarily responsible for the continuing tension and war in this important and sensitive region. The international community will thus be urged to shoulder its responsibility in this regard and deter Israel and force it to respect and implement the resolutions of international legitimacy.

Because of its principled policy, Syria has turned into a basic and important power in the region. Its role grew at a pan-Arab level and its international prestige was reinforced. Meanwhile, this made it a target for more imperialist conspiracies and pressures. Part of this campaign of pressures and blackmail is the United States' insistence until now on placing Syria on the list of terrorist countries and its endeavors to prevent any financial aid or credit facilities to it.

Profound social and economic changes and measures have taken place during those three decades. These changes and measures have entrenched and consolidated economic independence. A government sector of great strategic importance was established. Agricultural reform was

implemented, and its domain was expanded. Large areas of land were reclaimed. The Euphrates Dam and other dams were built. Irrigation projects were executed. Extensive and important steps were made to ensure rural areas had electricity and services. A successful policy to encourage agricultural production was pursued. A large network of roads and railroads was built.

The emergence of the National Progressive Front and the declaration of its charter 20 years ago, after the Corrective Movement, was an important, positive political step. Rather, it was, at that time, a qualitative leap toward political and party pluralism, after the existence of parties was denied and dealing with them on this basis was rejected. However, despite all this that has been accomplished, life requires continued advancement and development in accordance with its needs. It is very dangerous for any individual, party, or society to resign to the feelings of self-content, and of unwillingness to see the shortcomings produced by the development itself and to sincerely seek to avoid and remove them at the right time.

During these decades, much water has flowed into the river of life. The structure of our society, and the level of its awareness and requirements have been subject to deep changes. Since it is normal for flaws and defects to emerge as could happen in any experiment, then it is also normal that what could have been regarded as a progressive or acceptable measure at one particular time could be unable to keep pace with changes, and consequently require reconsideration and development.

The activities, resolutions, and atmosphere created by the seventh unified meeting of our Syrian Communist Party, the convening of which was an indication of the practical practice of political and party pluralism in Syria and which became an important political and national phenomenon, indicated the importance and need to entrench and develop this pluralism. There is a pressing need for the National Progressive Front to have a more effective role in the life of the country, and to practice wider activity in order to contribute along with the allied Arab Socialist Ba'th Party to mobilizing our people's capability to face the dangers of the savage imperialist onslaught and the massive challenges facing us, and to search together for the best solutions to our problems and difficulties. We believe that it is time to think about issuing a developed and democratic parties law that organizes their presence and guarantees freedom of action to them.

If the developing of political and party pluralism and activating the democratic dialogue is a national and social necessity, then to render success to the development process requires organizing and developing economic pluralism in a manner that benefits all available capabilities, potentials, and talents, and employs them in the development process.

We, as all militants in the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party and the General Federation of Trade Unions, believe that this pluralism should be based in the government sector and in developing its role by tackling the difficulties it is facing, liberating it from anything that obstructs its development, and improving its performance and the manner with which

it is dealt by the state and its establishments. This should be done on the basis of directing and encouraging the private and joint sectors to work for meeting the products and services needs of the people and the homeland. In our view, the basic condition for the success of the development process is by increasing attention to the interests of workers and making salaries and incentives cope with the cost of living.

This year, the 8 March anniversary is coming at a time when the country is preparing for the start of the new term of office for President Hafiz al-Asad. The people's broad masses hope that this will be the beginning of a new more advanced stage for the homeland and people in which all obstacles to social development are eliminated and new wider horizons for broad democratic development are opened in a manner that leads to deepening the internal reconciliation and makes the principles of the democratic dialogue that is based on the joint respect of views and relations of constructive cooperation between our people's forces the principles and relations prevalent in the society. The objective of this is to consolidate national unity and mobilize all potentials in order to contribute to the realization of all-out economic and social development and improve the standard of living of our working and productive masses.

On the occasion of the start of his new term, we wish President Hafiz al-Asad good health, activity, and all success in continuing to shoulder his great responsibilities and his relentless work of realizing the objectives of our people, homeland, and nation.

TUNISIA

Hedi Khelil Discusses Personal History

92AF0432A Tunis REALITES in Arabic 17 Jan 92 p 15

[Interview with member of Parliament Hedi Khelil, by Loutfi Lamari, place and date not given]

[Text] When I entered his offices in the Parliament, I knew that I had arrived fifteen minutes late for our appointment. It had been my intention to make an excuse, as other Tunisians do, about the capital's traffic congestion. But my host surprised me in not suffering at all from this congestion, only because he leaves his automobile at home and rides the Metro, like other citizens. Perhaps my host noticed that I did not believe that an official such as he, who had assumed the Secretariat of State for Education, then been appointed Minister of Education for a full year—that a person such as this would resort to riding the Metro, when he was accustomed to the life of a luxurious automobile and private chauffeur. So he took out his riding pass, which was a special one granted to parliamentary deputies.

I found myself asking my host:

[Lamari] Don't the deputies have enough perks, without adding to them a card for free travel?

[Khelil] That card is granted to deputies so that they can get around easily. As to the other perks you are talking about, I don't think there are as many as you think.

[Lamari] But it's well known that deputies are usually from the fortunate class, meaning that they're usually doctors, lawyers, or [other] professionals.

[Khelil] Or from the middle class. Don't forget that our parliament has a large number of teachers, minor employees and medium-size merchants.

[Lamari] As to you, which group do you belong to?

[Khelil] I am basically a teacher. I was a professor of secondary education, with a specialty in mathematics.

[Lamari] Did you choose that specialty out of conviction, or by chance?

[Khelil] I was intending to specialize in engineering, got my baccalaureate degree with honors, and won the President of the Republic Prize, which qualified me to get a scholarship to study abroad, specializing in engineering. But a few days before the trip, I decided to stay in Tunisia and join the mathematics department of the Institute for Graduate Studies in Tunis. In 1961 I completed my studies with a degree in mathematics, and at the same time I got a diploma from the Graduate Teachers' Institute with honors, which won me the President of the Republic Prize.

[Lamari] But you haven't told me why you decided not to travel to study abroad?

[Khelil] Oh, I almost forgot. I decided not to at the request of my father, whose only wish was to see me become a teacher.

[Lamari] Did you make his wish come true?

[Khelil] Indeed. I recall joining the [Khazindar] Institute as a professor of mathematics. I haven't forgotten my first lesson, and never will. While I was engrossed in giving the first lesson I saw my father, wearing old clothes, watching me from a distance, with tears of joy streaming down his face at the sight of me as I was making his wish come true.

[Lamari] But what if he had lived to see you a cabinet minister?

[Khelil] I don't know what would have happened, but his wish was before that.

[Lamari] What did your father do?

[Khelil] He was a simple peasant, but even so, he was bent on teaching me.

[Lamari] Did you study in Kerba?

[Khelil] Yes. I entered the Koranic school [kuttub] and then [elementary] school itself, where I stayed until a relatively advanced age (9 years old), as we had to wait until the end of World War II—the school was occupied by Axis troops in the beginning, then by Allied troops. After my elementary studies, I went to the supplementary school in Nabeul, and after that I tried to join the Sadeqi Institute, but in vain.

[Lamari] Why?

[Khelil] For reasons not worth mentioning.

[Lamari] And if I told you that I would like to persist in hearing these reasons?

[Khelil] I'd tell you that the institute was not open to all. That was why I joined the secondary school in Sousse after passing the inspection, and I continued my studies there until I got my baccalaureate with honors.

[Lamari] Are there any names from today of those that were with you in the same institute?

[Khelil] Many names graduated from the institute, foremost of whom I may mentioned His Excellency President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali; Prime Minister Hamed Karoui; Mr. Hamed Malika, chief advisor to the president; Mr. Hedi Baccouche, Mr. Mohamed Ghannouchi; Mr. Mohamed Saad; Mr. Mohamed Belhaj Omar; Mr. Elnouri Zaraqati—not to forget the most important of all, Mr. Ahmed Nouredine, the former Minister of Education, as well as Minister of Equipment [& Housing].

[Lamari] Good; so much for your academic career. What about your political career?

[Khelil] I began it when I was a student in Nabeul. I remember that I took part in the March 1953 demonstration that set off from the institute as a march which was joined by many citizens. After I transferred to Sousse, I joined the General Union of Tunisian Students, which included students in its ranks. We had many meetings; Muhammad Belhaj Omar was one of the supervisors over its organization; I mention this to be truthful. The meetings were to coordinate the student movements with the national struggle.

[Lamari] Hedi, sir, I apologize for abridging some of these distances. So now you are a professor, teaching mathematics in the Khazindar Institute. And then?

[Khelil] Then I was nominated and democratically elected head of the municipality of Korba for two terms. During that time, I was compelled to leave teaching, because I was called to supervise the provincial teaching department in Nabeul. I then moved to the ministry as an assistant director of technical and vocational education; then was appointed director of secondary education, from 1973 until 1983, when I was appointed president and director general of the vocational training office. That was until May 1987, when I was appointed Secretary of State in the Ministry of Education, responsible for elementary and secondary education, and on 7 November 1987, the institutor of the change [i.e. Ben 'Ali] entrusted me with the same mission before naming me Minister of Education. I continued working at the head of this ministry until April 1989, when I was elected to Parliament.

[Lamari] You spoke of the change; when it happened, you were Secretary of State for Education. How did you learn that it had happened?

[Khelil] At six-thirty in the morning, the internal interests attache in the Ministry of Education gave me the news of

the change and asked me whether I would permit him to open the doors of the ministry or not. I ordered him to open them, and said that I would come immediately. I got into my car and headed to the ministry, through the streets of the capital, noticing that movement in the streets was very normal.

[Lamari] How did you learn the news of your appointment as Secretary of State in the new government?

[Khelil] I learned of it while I was in my car on my way to the Ministry.

[Lamari] As long as we ventured into appointments—some curious people want to know how one is appointed a minister. I mean, were you consulted about it beforehand?

[Khelil] Of course, one is consulted beforehand.

[Lamari] And when one is removed?

[Khelil] A minister knows of his removal. With removal, of course, there is no consultation.

[Lamari] Hedi, sir, what do you consider to be your most important achievement during your tenure at the ministry?

[Khelil] Establishing the basic school.

[Lamari] What is the achievement you wished to achieve but weren't able to?

[Khelil] At the Ministry of Education, I wanted to concentrate on decentralization in terms of administrative action and pedagogy. In the vocation training office, I wanted to implement a training system like the German system, which depends upon coordination between the needs of the institution and the training centers, because I believe that the development of human resources is the future of the country.

[Lamari] During your tenure at the ministry, did you bring in friends and relatives to fill some of the needs?

[Khelil] Believe me when I tell you that this point has brought me great problems, because I insisted that there was to be no interference in illegitimate issues. I was only helping to settle some matters that did not contravene the law.

[Lamari] God knows. You have a son studying in Canada. How did he get his scholarship?

[Khelil] My oldest son got an engineering degree in media [studies], and was one of the top graduates. That is what enabled him to get a Canadian scholarship—not a Tunisian scholarship.

[Lamari] What about your other children?

[Khelil] I have a daughter looking for work. My youngest son is preparing for the baccalaureate exam.

[Lamari] And their mother?

[Khelil] At home. She chose to stay there; she's content there.

[Lamari] Hedi, sir, who are the cabinet ministers closest to you in the present government?

[Khelil] I have an excellent relationship with them. Perhaps the closest relationship of all is with Mr. Mohamed Ghannouchi (Minister of Finance), and also Mr. Abdelaziz Ben Dhia (Minister of Defense). I also have better-than-average relations uniting me with Messrs. Abdallah Kallel, Minister of State and Minister of the Interior; and Mohamed Saad, Minister of Youth and Childhood. Do you know why?

[Lamari] No.

[Khelil] Because Abdallah Kallel and Mohamed Saad were mathematics students of mine at the institutes in Sfax and Sousse, to my great honor.

[Lamari] Do you still aspire to be a colleague of those ministers?

[Khelil] Being a minister is not my plan. I always aspire to serve my country, wherever I am, and I have never asked for anything. All the responsibilities offered to me were always at the request of the administration or the regime.

[Lamari] Fine. Supposing we leave your political life, and ask your permission [to go into] your private life. Now that we know the make-up of your family, may we know the age of its head?

[Khelil] I am 55 years old.

[Lamari] How do you spend your leisure time?

[Khelil] Being a peasant. My father left me two hectares, which I use for irrigated cultivation. I also look after the house garden.

[Lamari] If you watch television, what impresses you about it?

[Khelil] The news, and the Minzar ["Telescope"] program, even though I had a bad experience with it.

[Lamari] Clarification?

[Khelil] In one episode, in 1988, the program's producer intended—imagining an episode about the deterioration of the state of some elementary schools—to choose a school located in the al-Tadamun district, in which there had been a number of sections in a state of decline for some time. The program's producer intended to buy a ball from the druggist opposite the school, to give it to the children to play with in front of the parts of the school, to enable him to film their play. All the noise disturbed the pupils inside those sections, meaning that he had bought a ball to point out the deterioration. We weren't going to censor him, but due to extraordinary circumstances [changes thought]—but in spite of this, I am interested in watching the program, because of the important situations it presents.

[Lamari] Fine, as long as we've gone backward, might we know what your worst experience has been?

[Khelil] Many memories, foremost the death of my father, then the death of my mother; also, the death of Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme. I was deeply influenced by his

ideas in the field of education. He was the motive behind the basic school project that he implemented when he became Minister of Education in Sweden.

[Lamari] And the sweetest memory you have?

[Khelil] The memory of 20 March 1956. I remember that on that day we were students in the dormitory, and when we heard the news of the signing of the agreement for total independence. We surrounded the director of the institute—he was French, belong to the Red Hand [organization] in the dormitory, but the president of the Constitutional League intervened, allowing us to leave the dormitory and join the masses, so we went. I remember that we stayed up til morning.

Another memory I treasure was the first day I began teaching, and the sight of my father, which I told you about.

Also, the the moment I left teaching was one of the most anguished and difficult moments I ever lived through, even though I had been called to a higher position.

[Lamari] Hedi, sir, you have been a member of Parliament since 1989. Do you remember the most unusual request you had to make to Parliament?

[Khelil] Actually, unusual requests are many, but I will tell you only what a citizen advised me to ask. He had asked why, when one is born, the family has no difficulty registering his name at the municipality; any member of the family can do that task. But things get much more complicated when registering a death. This citizen asked why we make it easy for those coming into life and so hard for people leaving it.

[Lamari] Hedi, sir, a final question. You were a brilliant student of mathematics. Today, years after you left mathematics, are you able to solve mathematical equations put to you?

[Khelil] Of course. You can try me if you want.

[Lamari] No, no, I don't think you chose the best person to test you.

Forum Focuses on University Education Reform *92AF0556C Tunis LE TEMPS in French 2 Feb 92 p 5*

[Article by Mouldi M'Barek: "University Map in the Year 2000"]

[Text] Every region will have its own university center.

The first cycle of higher education will be reformed.

Teacher training institutes will replace normal schools.

The third cycle of higher education will be simplified.

"Why do brilliant students fail in Tunisian colleges when they are able to have remarkable careers in foreign universities?!"

"Should the Arabization of education be accelerated without first evaluating the current experience?"

"Are secondary teachers well-trained pedagogically?"

"Is there a system of competition in the Tunisian university making it possible to encourage brilliant professors and students?"

"Are the students well supervised?"

"Should a School of Education Sciences be established to ensure the proper training of experts in the field of pedagogy?"

All those questions were asked during the forum held by the RCD [Democratic Constitutional Rally] on the evening of Wednesday 29 January 1992 in the presence of Mohamed Charfi, minister of education and sciences.

In his speech, the minister of education and sciences, Mohamed Charfi, first emphasized that "under the old regime, the Tunisian university was shaken by a triple crisis related to unions, organization, and structure."

From the very first year of change, however, various steps were taken to rehabilitate the student union and also to reform higher education, which no longer met our society's new requirements: "we need an overall vision in order to build the future on a solid foundation," said Charfi.

To make our university a center of influence and knowledge, a high commission on the reform of higher education, consisting of all the parties concerned and representing every region in the republic, is giving thought to suitable reforms.

"We have drawn the university map for the year 2000 in such a way as to provide each region with a center of higher education," the minister of education and sciences was careful to emphasize.

Beginning now, the normal schools will be replaced by teacher training institutes.

In addition, the schools of science and humanities, which train excellent teachers, will be directed to introduce pedagogical courses so that teachers will be better prepared and equipped to carry out their mission properly.

Concerning the first cycle of higher education—which is currently a terrible waste for the nation, since only 30 percent of the students get through their first year—Mohamed Charfi stressed the need for an overhaul.

The purpose of the reform is to create a licentiate and a master's degree. In that way, students with a grade average of less than 10 out of 20 will be directed to work toward a licentiate (a three-year course of study in all), and students with a grade average of 10 or more out of 20 will be steered toward a master's degree (a four-year course of study in all).

However, that proposal must take the labor market into account. Charfi wondered: "Will the students who are steered toward a licentiate be able to find jobs?"

Another purpose of the reform is to reschedule certain subjects for students who achieve their grade average but fail in one subject.

The student will then be able to move on to the next year of study but will have to retake the subject in question.

In addition, the reform asks whether it is necessary for a student to retake certain courses that he has already completed satisfactorily.

The inspiration for all those proposals comes from other developed or developing countries, because the success rate in Tunisian higher education is mediocre.

Mohamed Charfi wondered:

"Why is it that brilliant students fail in Tunisian colleges when they are able to have remarkable careers in other, foreign universities?"

The third cycle will also be reformed, and the "state doctorate" will be replaced by a single doctorate for all disciplines.

Many speakers took part in the debate. Prof. Mohamed Ben Fatma, for example, proposed the establishment of a school of education sciences, pointing out that the educational system lacks real specialists in the pedagogical field. On the subject of Arabization, the same speaker said that it "is necessary to evaluate the current experience."

Prof. Abderrahman Boukricha stressed "the need to strengthen guided study in the first cycle of higher education so as to keep the student constantly up to date."

Prof. Zouheir Mdhafer proposed that as an experiment, students who use up their four scholarships ["cartouches"] be required to pay a registration fee of 500 dinars. Prof. Ali Bajir suggested that a pedagogical committee be established in each university school.

Prof. Abdessatar Grissa commented on the absence of university traditions in our country. "In the United States, for example, a professor works more than eight hours at the university, which is open until 2200 hours," he pointed out.

The minister of education and sciences, Mohamed Charfi, said in his response that all those proposals would be considered and that from now on, our university must be rehabilitated to become a place of knowledge and a beacon shining its light throughout the country.

Goals Outlined for Agricultural Research Program *92AF0556A Tunis LE TEMPS in French 9 Feb 92 p 3*

[Article by Z.A.: "All-Around Restructuring"]

[Text] Because it is currently one of the main paths to development and indeed one of the areas involved in the national security of states, scientific research in Tunisia is on the way to benefiting from more interest.

Scientific research now has its own secretariat of state. And in a sector where it is of highly strategic value—in this case, agriculture—it is undergoing a thorough restructuring so that its contribution will be genuinely profitable to the primary sector.

The restructuring in question is taking place at all levels. At least that is the preliminary conclusion one can draw from an interview with the top official in the ERESA

[Establishment for Agricultural Research and Higher Education], which is the main organization overseeing all scientific research and higher education in connection with agriculture in Tunisia. That top official is Moncef Daaloul.

The ERESA was established in May 1991 and is responsible for managing the agricultural research institutes and schools, of which there are 15, including six scientific research centers.

Its missions include agricultural scientific research, of course, and that consists basically of planning everything from the selection of research topics to the subsequent follow-up and evaluation of the work and its results. Those areas were once among the main weak points in scientific research, which has nevertheless contributed to the improvement of production in the field of agriculture.

And precisely because of its not inconsiderable achievements in that area and in response to the growth of research structures, a reform and a new organization of work have become necessary.

That reform was the subject of the main recommendation to come out of a study which was conducted between 1987 and 1990 and which constituted the prelude to the restructuring of the current agricultural research system.

Ten Program Committees Being Set Up

Daaloul emphasizes that the study in question provided a diagnosis of the situation, revealed its weak points, and set forth the priorities for research. Ten priority programs for agricultural scientific research were selected: major crops, stockraising, olive growing, tree crops (primarily citrus crops), potatoes, truck farming, farm mechanization, irrigation, forests and CES [expansion not given], and, last, desertification. As can be seen, those are the principal centers of interest in Tunisian agriculture.

Financing totaling nearly 18,570 million dinars, half of which consists of a loan from the World Bank, has been allocated to implementation of those research programs.

How will the programs be carried out?

The director of the ERESA says that a new working methodology is being adopted and that its first link is the establishment of program committees. Those committees, which incidentally are in the process of being set up, will include experts in the field in which research is to be carried out as well as researchers, teachers, and representatives of the government and of farmers or interoccupational groups.

And it is those program committees—of which there are also 10—which will be responsible, upon receipt of research requests submitted primarily by the AFVA (Agricultural Training and Extension Agency), for determining the priority topics for research.

At present, for example, a research topic concerned with the diseases affecting cereals has already been approved. The reason is that nearly 7 million quintals were lost last year because of a certain type of disease.

The other new feature being introduced is that the program committees will be responsible for determining the budget for each research project and for monitoring and evaluating the work.

Gains To Be Consolidated

Regarding the organization of research, the plans call for establishing seven research centers (one in each natural region). Those centers, four of which are already assured of financing, will be set up around the higher agricultural schools—that is, where there is a heavy concentration of human and material resources. Daaloul emphasizes that their mission is not limited to scientific research. They will also be responsible for extension work with farmers because the ultimate goal of scientific research is to genuinely benefit from the theoretical results of that research so as to improve agricultural production qualitatively and quantitatively and achieve the goal of food sufficiency everywhere.

In any case, the achievements of agricultural scientific research to date are here to remind us of the importance of that extension work, even though shortcomings still exist.

The increase of from 20 to 25 percent in cereal production and the improved productivity in stockraising (also 20 percent), not to mention the improvements introduced into numerous vegetable and fruit species, are all reasons for satisfaction.

However, they need to be consolidated through other research and, above all, to be put to use by a larger number of farmers.

Contribution by Professionals Imperative

Based on experience, it has been realized that the results of applying the gains achieved through research tend to be sectoral, the reason being that in most cases, the Tunisian farmer remains very attached to a very specific production system.

That is another flaw that agricultural scientific research is intended to overcome through this restructuring. Daaloul says that as a result of bringing multidisciplinary researchers together in the future research centers, an entire production system will be studied rather than a very specific aspect of agriculture. Those researchers, who will be backed by sociologists, psychologists, and so on, will try to discover why a farmer refuses or is unable to improve the productivity of his farm both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The fact remains that even after being restructured and adapted to modern methods, agricultural scientific research and scientific research in general cannot achieve their objectives and contribute effectively to the country's socioeconomic development unless they receive larger budgets. It is the state's responsibility, of course, to see that they do, but it is also up to the professionals in agriculture—in the case in question—or in any other economic sector to also contribute to that end.

Obstacles to Export Market Development Noted

92AF0556B Tunis *LE TEMPS* in French 10 Feb 92 p 2

[Article by M.L.: "What Strategy for Exports?"]

[Text] Tunisian exports rose by over 11 percent in 1991. That performance must be consolidated by planning measures that are more elaborate and better suited to the new trends in the world economy.

During a meeting with the minister of national economy two days ago, the president of the republic recommended that work continue to win new foreign markets.

New Markets

What strategy should be implemented to promote our exports and give the firms what they need to establish themselves in new markets?

General and sectoral statistics confirm that the results achieved since implementation of the economic recovery plan are encouraging and that they bear witness to the ability of a large number of Tunisian firms to adapt to a more competitive environment. While nearly two-thirds of the products we import have been deregulated, the rate of import cover is rising steadily by more than eight points.

Growth Factor

Quite obviously, the deregulation of imports and prices has to a large extent been a factor in the growth of exports. It has forced the firms to seek ways to improve their products and control production costs.

Despite that performance, the production and marketing apparatus is suffering from a number of weaknesses that can be grouped under three headings:

1. The small size of the firms, a factor that does not favor the achievement of economies of scale or the development of research programs.
2. Heavy dependence on foreign orders and a small number of customers.
3. The predominance of subcontracting to fill foreign orders, especially in the textile industry, and failure to develop brands unique to Tunisian producers. Those shortcomings explain the motivation behind a national overall strategy based on the principle that making our products competitive domestically is the best way to ensure sustained economic development for Tunisia.

Strategic Factors

The first strategic factor concerns the business environment.

This is a matter first of all of controlling inflation so as to prevent another overvaluation of the dinar, since such a situation would reduce the competitiveness of our export products and intensify foreign competition on the local market.

Next, it is important to strengthen the measures for deregulating and opening up the market with a view to intensifying domestic competition.

Last, it is necessary to accelerate the process of privatizing export-oriented state enterprises in sectors considered nonstrategic.

In addition, there are strategic choices to be made. It is felt that with the opening up of the economy to the outside world and Tunisia's membership in GATT, the distinction between the local market and the export market should become less pronounced.

In other words, the local market will be simply one segment of a wider market. The result is that Tunisian exporters should take a more long-term view and position themselves to benefit as much as possible from Tunisia's comparative advantages.

Structural Arrangements

The third strategic factor involves structural arrangements centered basically around international trading companies, which play an important role because of the small size of the firms.

Those trading companies must nevertheless be provided with appropriate means enabling them to take on the duties assigned to them. For instance, they can constitute an interface capable of rationalizing market efforts ranging from market identification to the conclusion of contracts.

The development of more widely based stock ownership, access to the stock market, and company consolidations and mergers are to be encouraged with a view to promoting the establishment of larger production units capable of responding better to the needs of foreign customers.

But above all, instead of being centralized, a firm's export department must be better structured in such a way as to ensure that all personnel contribute to the export effort. Last, more rigorous management is essential in the case of functions that have so far been weak points as far as a number of Tunisian exporters are concerned, namely, market forecasting, supplies, methods of determining sales prices, and production and delivery in accordance with commitments made to the customer.

Factors Contributing to Rural Illiteracy Rates

92AF0556D Tunis LE TEMPS in French 2 Feb 92 p 4

[Text] Illiteracy and early dropouts affect girls much more [than boys], basically in the rural areas. The figures indicate that 25.2 percent of girls between 10 and 14 years of age are illiterate in the rural areas, compared to 3.4 percent of those in the same age group in the urban areas.

With the help of the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the cooperation of UNICEF, the National Union of Tunisian Women [UNFT] was able to study the reasons why girls in rural areas leave school.

The study to determine why rural girls interrupt their education began in 1990. It covered about 1,200 families and 82 primary schools scattered over 13 governorates representing Tunisia's rural environment.

The results of that study were presented yesterday for debate as part of the national conference on the dropout

rate among rural girls. The conference is being held under the patronage of the president of the republic and is being sponsored jointly by the UNFT and UNICEF.

In his opening speech, Abdallah Kallel, minister of state and minister of interior, discussed the measures taken to strengthen the position of women in society. He also pointed out that school attendance by girls has improved, considering that it rose from 37 percent in 1972 to nearly 50 percent in 1990-1991.

That improvement is an indicator of the progress achieved in Tunisia and the Arab world in general as far as education and teaching are concerned.

On that subject, Juliette Sayegh, UNICEF's representative in Tunisia, pointed out that the illiteracy rate in the Arab world had declined from 72 percent in 1970 to 54 percent in 1985.

"However, there are currently 15 million illiterate children in the Arab world, and 10 million of them are girls," she said.

Domestic Chores

In Tunisia, the situation among rural girls as regards school attendance and illiteracy falls short of expectations. Neziha Mezhoud, president of the UNFT, noted in her speech that the new law on education, which makes it compulsory for parents to enroll their children in school, may reverse that trend in the medium term.

In studying the factors involved in early dropouts by girls in the rural areas, the UNFT's purpose is to help discover a strategy for keeping them in school.

The study shows that the high cost of education, poor scholastic achievement among girls, and domestic chores are the three main factors.

Next in line are the distance to the school, housing conditions, the qualities of the teacher, and employment either in a family activity or outside the family.

Marriage, conflicts with parents, and moving from one school to another are at the bottom of the list.

Let us take a closer look at the three main causes listed above.

The study's authors indicate that even if education is free, it places an additional burden on the family budget, if only because of the need to buy school supplies. Others say that school deprives them of a source of income in the medium term. "Often, because of budget constraints and the traditional way in which tasks are divided up within the family, parents take the daughter out of school first and then the boy," the study says.

Absence of Parental Involvement

The other two major factors in school dropouts among rural girls—domestic chores and poor scholastic achievement—are closely related.

The fact that a rural girl attends school does not relieve her of responsibility for certain domestic chores.

Those chores, generally involving hard work, may reduce the amount of time devoted to studying, and this affects schoolwork.

In addition, lack of involvement by parents who are themselves illiterate may discourage their daughters. Since the parents do not understand the reasons for the poor schoolwork done by their daughter, they do nothing at all to help her overcome her difficulties.

On the contrary, she gets much more in the way of sermons and criticism than she does in the way of comfort and encouragement.

Along with those three main factors, housing conditions, the teacher, and distance also play a deciding role.

Close quarters at home and, above all, the absence of a place to study make it difficult for girls to stay in school. There is also the fact that walking several kilometers in the dark, either early in the morning or quite late in the evening, presents problems for girls.

A number of them—20 percent of those polled—mentioned another reason that led them to abandon their schooling: the qualities of the teacher.

The latter's frequent absence, the practice of violence, and inability to understand the lessons were the criticisms directed at the teacher by those girls.

In addition to ranking the reasons for school dropouts among girls in the rural areas, the survey also includes the recommendations formulated by the task force.

Among those recommendations are the following: organization of a school bus service, an expanded network of school cafeterias, free education [text missing].

Job Fair Concept for Employment Outreach Program

92AF0552C Tunis LE TEMPS in French 31 Jan 92 p 4

[Article by M.L.]

[Text] The training of young people, and their integration into the economically active population, is an essential factor in Tunisia's employment situation. The programs that have been developed in this connection are part of a comprehensive approach to economic development and in particular to the requirements of private enterprise, which is the "primordial cell" of that development.

A proven way to encourage this process is to hold job fairs.

It is an established fact that Tunisian business has recruitment needs that are difficult to meet in the absence of a research profile of the job market, while at the same time those who are looking for work present an approximate profile that does not enable them to find a job.

This is a dysfunction that the people in charge of vocational training in Tunisia have identified and to which they are striving to find a satisfactory response as quickly as possible. Consequently, no business—regardless of its size—can any longer afford not to optimize its utilization

of Tunisia's human resources, which are the nation's principal trump card. Tunisia—which has made exports a major cog in its economic system—has made business responsible for an ever-increasing effort whose principal objective is to improve competitiveness and productivity, which are the indispensable ingredients for establishing a presence in the world market.

In the developed nations, so-called "job fairs" are regularly held in which persons who have skills to offer can negotiate with a prospective employer for a job.

These "job fairs" are an option that must be explored, if only to attenuate the severe unemployment that especially afflicts secondary school and university graduates, who—according to data obtained from the national population and employment survey—constitute 31 percent of all unemployed.

In this connection, we may recall an altogether timid initiative on the part of the Ministry of Vocational Training and Employment, which consisted of holding "national youth-business encounters." The aim was to undertake a multidimensional action directed toward business enterprises and young people and to set up an institutional mechanism to manage training and employment.

It is an action that must be supported by other measures. Moreover, these companies will obtain significant benefits, in that they will be able to draw upon an area where it would be possible for them to enter into a relationship with job seekers that could be of mutual benefit.

Another advantage of these job fairs is that they would undoubtedly make businessmen aware of the opportunity thus afforded to integrate capable young people into the process of developing their skills, and also to encourage these business enterprises to join in the national programs for the vocational placement of young people.

It is also important to encourage further development of the institutional structure in the domain of education and training. This would primarily mean enabling the commission on the vocational training courses (which were created by the decree of 27 August 1987) to define the adjustments to be made in the programs for the vocational placement of young people, so that these programs may be made more effective within the framework of the Eighth Plan.

In any event, it has become necessary to put in place a structure within which the services in charge of vocational and job training, business enterprises, and institutions for education and training will operate. This process should respond to the strong desire for establishing a new form of dialogue and cooperation—a partnership that would promote a better interrelationship between the potentialities of the coming generations, on the one hand, and the requisites for development of the various sectors of the economy.

One of the most important objectives of this type of action should be to involve private enterprise in the implementation of the youth employment programs that are designed to meet the need for recruiting management personnel and technicians.

BANGLADESH

Problems in Building Democratic Structures Detailed

92AS0642A Dhaka BANGLAR BANI in Bengali
15 Feb 92 p 5

[Article by Abul Kasem Fazlul Hak: "Learning To Build a Democratic Society"]

[Text] In Bengali-speaking society, humanitarian ideals have developed to large extent, but the development of democratic thoughts and activities is considerably poor in Bangladesh. The humanitarian ideals developed by the works and activities of famous writers and social reformers like Vidyasagar, Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda, Rabin-dranath, Begum Rokeya, S. Wazed Ali, Mohammad Lutfar Rahaman, Kazi Abdul Odud, Abul Hossien, Nazrul Islam, Motaer Hossien Chaudhuri, Abul Fazl and by many other intellectuals. But the politicians never tried to understand the humanitarian ideals developed by these great intellectuals. Maybe, due to the lack of interest and apathy of the politicians, the intellectuals of this country did not emerge to think deeply about democratic and political ideals and on a larger scale.

Persons like Fazul Haq, Vasani, Mujib, and Mani Singh are our heritage in modern politics. From the analysis of the thought and activities, success and failure of these leaders, we have to learn the lessons to create a new future. Here, one important factor could be mentioned that in our modern politics, the use of intellect and thoughtfulness are seriously lacking. The method of thoughtlessness and the dominance of the policy of "direct action" in politics have reached the maximum point during the last decade. We, perhaps, cannot go any further following the course of "direct action."

The political systems of all the present world's poor countries including Bangladesh get corrupted mainly because of the following four reasons:

1. The leaders and workers of all the political parties suffer from the lack of the basic virtues of consciousness, inquisitiveness, apprehension, morale, cultivation, courage, and mental strength. These shortcomings are exposed in the forms of jealousy, rivalry, selfishness, narrowmindedness, restlessness, conspiracies, hoaxes, cheating, susceptibility to temptation, and nervousness from fear. Humanitarianism, democracy, and socialism are the subjects of ethical consideration and moral cultivation. This cultivation process should be carried through all activities of everyday life. From this standpoint, it must be admitted that the cultivation of democracy within the political parties of Bangladesh is not worth mentioning.

2. The government in power and the powerful groups with vested interests, in order to aberrate politics to their own interests, take the path of tempting and threatening the politicians openly and secretly. Due to the lack of moral strength in politics in the underdeveloped countries, this kind of tactic becomes effective and successful. The problem could be faced by strengthening the power of moral consideration and its proper cultivation.

3. The neocolonialist powers, in their own vested interests, try to aberrate the politics of poor countries by tempting or threatening the politicians—mainly by tempting. Because of a lack of moral strength and patriotism in the politicians of these poor nations, the neocolonialist powers are successful with their conspiracies. These neocolonialists take different approaches to stop the development of morale in these poor countries. This problem could be dealt with effectively with sufficient knowledge about the present world order.

4. Television, radio, and newspapers with a vested interest and the colored weekly magazines want to put the minds of the people in a coma in favor of vested interests. The media does this for its own business interests as well as to serve the vested interests of other groups. They become successful by taking the advantage of the absence of morale within the political parties. When the political parties, in their struggle to establish a lives of prosperity and freedom, depend on the vested interested newspapers to publicize their views instead of developing their own media, there begins the aberration of their politics. Every political party should have its own books, papers, and manifestos as its own media for true politics in a democratic framework and for the best interests of the people.

Political parties funds should be raised by the donation of people in a political system where politics is meant to serve the interests of the people. It is not possible for any party to direct its politics in the interest of the people by collecting donations from the neocolonialist powers and capitalist groups.

The powers of the bureaucrats and the capitalists are increasing in Bangladeshi society and, the controlling power of multinational organizations rendering financial help is expanding inside the country. We need to have a powerful government that can control and direct things in the interest of the people, otherwise, it will be impossible to establish a proper democratic system in the country. To establish a really powerful democratic government, the first and essential step is to develop an educational system based on humanitarian and democratic ideals and to create powerful political parties through the process of developed moral cultivation. Side by side, it is necessary to spread democratic thoughts and the realization of power among the people. Nothing can be achieved suddenly or within a short period of time.

In the present social framework of Bangladesh, nothing is in favor of developing a democratic statehood or society or life style or even an educational system. A fundamental change has to be made in every part of the present system for the establishment of a real democratic society.

Teachers or educational institutions will not put anything in the minds of the children, rather, they will help to develop the inner traits of the children's minds. "Through the interactions of the personalities of the teacher and the student, the inner possibilities of the child's mind will be able to manifest." A child is born with his mind like a plain white sheet of paper. On this plain white paper, something good could be written or something bad could be written,

a good picture could be drawn or a bad picture could be drawn. Again, after erasing some bad writings, a good one can be written on it. But after some time, in the process of repeated erasing and writing, the paper gets dirty and finally writing becomes illegible. It should be the ideal of education that something really good is written or drawn on the pages of a child's mind.

Society established schools and educational systems to keep its identity and to expand its values. According to many people, "Education is a process to keep the society alive and healthy. The identity and health of a society depend on the maintenance and development of many characteristics, such as, existing rules and regulations, customs and behavior, tradition, culture, language, knowledge, etc. Education transfers the stored tradition, culture, and knowledge to the future generation." With this objective society establishes schools, and the educational system is developed as an important organ of the state. Many kinds of moral questions are involved in education, educational institutions and systems. The types of problems of human life dealt with in moral science are found in education and in the educational system. Under Bangladesh's current situation, the attention of the whole nation should be given to subjects discussed in moral science.

In order to establish a democratic society in Bangladesh, we can secure the ideals and features of future education by blending our experience with these ideas, and through this process, we can chalk out the structure of the future educational system and educational institutions.

We must keep one thing clear about the ideal. The ideal is not reality and there would always be a difference between ideal and reality. When a particular ideal is realized, the ideal remains no more. It is the rule of human society that new ideals are created on the basis of the need of the reality and it is the human nature to move forward with the new ideal leaving the old one behind. Hence, an ideal is that which is not a reality, but could be transformed into reality and which, people believe, if transformed into reality, could serve a greater purpose of the society. We have to realize the ideals of democracy and education in the same light.

In British-ruled Bengal, the colonial rulers established a new social system and introduced a new educational system that would best serve their purposes. This new educational system was developed on the basis of the report of the Education Commission headed by Lord Macaulay published in 1935. After the end of British rule, the social and political system, which we inherited in the eastern Bengal, was deteriorating, decaying, and on the verge of ruin. Since the end of the British rule and until now, we are passing through a long-lasting transitional period in regard to social and political systems. During this period, numerous changes took place in the social framework and in the structure of the state. At the same time, unthinkable changes occurred on the international scene. Twenty years have already passed since the emergence of independent Bangladesh through the bloodshed of a war of liberation. Still, the problem of decaying is not yet solved.

The same educational system, introduced by the British, has been followed with a process of evolution. On several occasions, this educational system fell into crisis and it has also been reformed. The question is, how far has this educational system been improved by these reforms during the post-British-rule period; whether our educational system is improving or deteriorating? We believe that the educational system is closely connected with the state and with social systems. Our educational system is deteriorating and decaying in spite of all the reforms made to this system in the post-British-rule period. Although the number of the doctors, professors, justices, barristers, colonels, brigadiers, intellectuals, CSPs, MRCPs, FRCSs [expansions not given], journalists, writers have increased tremendously in the society, does that mean that there was real improvement in the basic educational system of the nation? Do we find the existence of great patriotism, social consciousness, and high ideals among these highly educated people? Why we are unable to solve any problems of the country in spite of having so many highly educated persons in the society?

With population growth, the number of educational institutions has increased, the educational system has expanded, and the rate of literate people has also increased. But are these improvements based on natural, thoughtful, well-planned, and higher ideals? Can we claim that there has been a qualitative and real improvement in our educational system?

Institutional education has a direct relation to the employment procedure of the state. In our country, very little is thought about the unemployment problem, rather, publicity is in full force to control population growth. In a country like Bangladesh, can we solve the problem of degradation by avoiding the pressing problem of unemployment?

For last 44 years in the post-British-rule period, in spite of all the reforms, the basis of our educational system gradually deteriorated and, at present, perhaps has reached the lowest level possible.

What is meant by education? The simple answer to this question to the guardians, teachers, and students is that it is the path to get a certificate after passing examinations. Why do you need a certificate? The answer is, certificates help to get respect in society and also a good certificate can help to get a good job. If you have higher degrees, specially foreign degrees, your social standing will increase considerably and that will help you to earn more money and to get more honor in society. I do not want to mention the popular belief about how to get a good certificate or a higher degree. We have forgotten the difference between good education and training. Our desires and professions, thoughts and realizations, are severely decaying.

Due to factionalism, repeated clashes, killings, and political unrest the doors of our educational institutions repeatedly remain closed. Horrifying news is published in the newspapers about the entanglement of academic sessions, confusion and lawlessness in the examination halls, errors on text papers and text books, mistakes in the evaluation

of answer scripts, corruption connected to the results of the examinations, irresponsibility and dishonesty of the teachers, private tuition, degradation of the text books and corruptions relating to it, embezzlement of funds of the educational institutions, etc. Since Macaulay's report of 1835, the whole educational system has never fallen into such a degraded and worthless condition.

Occasionally, such reports were published in the newspapers that the quality of the text books of our schools are worse compared to worldwide standards. We believe that there is some truth in it. The standard of the text books is much developed in our neighboring country of India. In the 19th century, the quality of the text books in our part of the world was much better in comparison to many other countries. It was good even in the first half of the 20th century. Until the rule of Ayub Khan began, the British model was followed in the writing of the text books. To face the challenge of the problems of national integrity in the then-Pakistan, a new scheme was implemented in the writing of the text books during the rule of Ayub Khan. That system is still followed with minor changes and reforms. In this process, the quality of the text books is gradually deteriorating from bad to worst.

The quality of the text books would never improve in the process in which the Text Book Board composes the books. This becomes clear from the observation of the organization and the style of management of the Text Book Board. But what is the purpose of getting involved in a discussion of an intricate problem like this? Is there any organized force in our society that really wants to face the problem? To my knowledge, there is no such organized force in our country. Is there any such force that at least wants to investigate the problem deeply?

There is no reason to blame the persons employed by the Text Book Board for the inferior quality of the text books. First, the activities of the Text Book Board are directed by government rules and regulations and, in fact, it is under the direct control of the government. In the absence of a good and efficient government, how would the Text Book Board get the opportunity to work effectively? Second, financial help is given by the neocolonialist organization for so-called research for text books and their composition. Through the unwritten policies of those organizations, a few powerful countries want to impose their influence and keep other countries dependent on them. The United States is in the center of those influential countries. The major organs of the United Nations work on the basis of the world program formulated by those neocolonialist nations.

If arrangements are made to compose text books independently from four different centers for the four education boards of secondary and higher secondary levels by a single well-planned program, it will be beneficial for the nation as well as for the cause of establishment of a democratic society. The ideal of democratic centralization should be followed instead of absolutely autocratic centralization. If four different kinds of books are published from four different boards, it would bring variety and at the same time, the nation would benefit.

An altogether new line of thought is necessary for the composition of text books. One fundamental problem of our educational system would be resolved if the quality of the text books is improved. It would bring new life to the culture of the nation and the process to solve the other problems of our national life could begin. If the standard of our text books is improved and the examination system could be made free from corruption, the students would be able to become self-dependent without the help of private tutors, and the teachers would also enjoy teaching the students with the help of good text books. A joyful association is needed between the writers, students, teachers, guardians and the text books and the educational institutions. It must be kept in mind that the writing of a text book is also a type of creative work and certainly not like machine work.

We need to have a policy to enrich ourselves by taking good things from the developed nations. But in this case, we must avoid the tendency of dependence. Good results will not come through blind imitation. There are many examples in history that an underdeveloped nation becomes developed and, on the other hand, a developed nation faces degeneration. We can take many lessons from these. We have to develop a nationalist policy for the benefit of our national education. Dependence in the fields of education and culture is more injurious than economic dependence. We must progress if we want to achieve it through our originality.

An educational system is the most vital organization of a society and state. Actually, it is the pivot around which the state and society move. The life of our society is decaying due to the decline of our educational system. The goals of reeducation should be considered separately a the professional education and both should be placed on independent standing.

The problems of Bangladesh are so deep, so enormous, and so fundamental in nature that the thought about reforming the educational system and the educational institutions is not sufficient enough. The politicians must also take responsibility for spreading education. The political parties, which are keen to establish democracy in Bangladesh, must take responsibility to educate party workers through party activities and to spread education among the common people. Since it is not possible for a political party to propagate party politics effectively depending on publicity, democracy cannot be established in Bangladesh depending solely on the reformation of the present educational system of the country. The political parties of this country, which want to establish democracy, must take lessons from history and have to take responsibility to spread education among the people of this nation.

Articles Detail Background on Rohingya Refugee Problem

Threatens Relations With Burma

92AS0643A Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali 1 Feb 92 p 4

[Article by N.M. Habibullah: "The Rohingya Problem and Bangladeshi-Burmese Relations"; quotation marks as published]

[Text] In fact, we maintain an astonishing silence regarding Bangladeshi-Burmese relations. If we look at history, we find that the people of Bengal went through tremendous sufferings for last 200 years as a result of this silence. The public life of Bengal was endangered by the tortures of the Mog (natives of Arakan, Burma) pirates. Entering at the mouth of the Meghna River, they captured and sold the Bengalis as slaves and even brought a lot of them to Arakan as slave workers.

In reality, the way Bangladesh looked at the bilateral Bangladeshi-Burmese relations, was not the way the Burmese Government considered them. Since 1948 until now, hundreds of thousands of Burmese citizens (Rohingas) were pushed into Bangladeshi territory. On the other hand, the Burmese Government spoke about maintaining good-neighbor relations with Bangladesh. Until now, the Burmese Government did not stop the policy of driving the Rohingas out of Arakan. There is no chance of any fundamental improvement in Bangladeshi-Burmese relations until the rights of the Rohingas are established in Arakan in the political framework of Burma.

Since the independence of Burma on 4 January 1948, the process of driving the Rohingya citizens out of Arakan into Bangladesh began and that policy still exists. The question is why and how this unrooting process of the Rohingas is still continuing.

The Rohingas of Arakan speak "Royai," a regional language. This language is completely different from the regional language of Chittagong. Even three decades ago, the conflict between the people speaking the Royai and Chittagong languages created unrest in the public life of the larger Chittagong district. Once the large Chittagong district extended to the Feni River and was included in the independent Rosang kingdom. During that time, Arakan was called Rosang. The "Chittagongi" language-speaking people were identified as "Chati" by the Royais. The Chatis lived in the northern part of Chittagong and a small group of Royais lived in the part that is presently known as Cox Bazar district. Two hundred years ago, there was almost no human habitation in the Kaksbazar area, but it is known that there was small habitation in Ramu Sadar. The old families of Ramu claim themselves the touring companions of Shah Shuja, the Mughol prince.

In fact, the refugees, who came from Arakan, made this Kaksbazar district habitable by their agricultural and other efforts in this area, which was covered by dense forest. There is also small historical story behind this.

In 1784, Vodapaya, the king of Burma, attacked and captured Arakan and made it one of the provinces of Burma by destroying hundreds of years of Arakan's independent status. Once the Mogs were known as pirates. Sandwip and Dianga of Chittagong were the main operation centers of the Mogs. Nawab Shaesta Khan, after defeating Chittagong, annexed it to Mughol rule. The Mogs left Chittagong and fled to Arakan. These habitually barbarian Mog robbers did not attain good status in the Mog society of Arakan. On the other hand, when the Arakani King Sanda-Thu-Damma (Chandra-Su-Dharma)

killed the Mughol Prince Shah Shuja along with his family, an armed conflict began between the Muslims of Rosang and the Arakani monarchical forces. At one stage, the Muslims of Rosang set fire to the king's palace. With open arms in hand, the frenzied Muslims carried out the total destruction of Arakan. The Muslims started out by putting someone of their choice on the throne and, if dissatisfied, ousted the king and placed another one on the throne. This kind of thing went on until 1710 when one clever Arakani feudal lord named Sandaweiza placed himself on the throne after disarming the Muslims by distributing the huge lands of the Rambri and Chakpru area to them. Henceforth, the Muslims abandoned their arms and became agriculturists. After some time, taking the advantage of the Muslim's docility, the armed Mog robbers emerged in the politics of Arakan. The power loving Mog feudal lords started to use these Mog robbers as their power source. In 1782, when a feudal lord named Thama came to power in Rosang, Gha-Tha-Di, another feudal lord with a high-level family connection, went to Ava, the capital of Burma, and inspired King Vodapaya to invade Arakan. The condition was, after capturing Arakan, that Vodapaya would place Gha-Tha-Di on the throne of Arakan, and in return, the Arakani king would pay taxes to the Burmese king. But Vodapaya broke his word and made Arakan a province of Burma after capturing it. As a result, a bloody war began between the Mogs of Arakan and the Burmese army. At that time, the Muslims of Rosang were completely politically inactive. Due to the torture inflicted by Burmese army, the Arakanis fled from their country and took refuge in British-ruled Chittagong. Between 1784 and 1798, two-thirds of Arakan's population left their country. The Rohingas took shelter in the Muslim community of Chittagong while the Mog community, took shelter in the hills of Chittagong, and continued fighting against Burma. In fact, since the coming of the Rohingas in Chittagong, the Royai-Chati conflict began. During the next period, the Royais or the Rohingas began to move south toward the present Kaksbazar district. Until after 1865, the Rohingas remained a floating community in southern Chittagong.

Centering on the issue of the freedom struggle of the Mogs against Burma, which began after 1784, the first Anglo-Burmese war began. As a result of the Anglo-Burmese war of 1823-24, Arakan came under the control of the British East India Company. After establishing stability in Arakan, the floating Rohingas began returning to their land. In addition, the British Government, in order to develop the waste land of Arakan, granted waste land to the floating Rohingas by two different acts—the Arakan Waste Land Grant Rules of 1839 and 1841 and the Pegu Waste Land Grant Rules of 1865—and encouraged the Rohingas to establish dwellings there. The Rohingas labored hard to develop the waste land into agricultural land and set up conditions for permanent dwellings.

In fact, during the last phase of British rule, a tendency developed among the Mog community of Arakan to stamp the Rohingas as outsiders. According to the Arakani intellectuals, British power created the Mog-Rohinga conflict by their policy of "divide and rule." Second, when the

nationalist and freedom movement began in British India and British Burma, the Mog leadership also became active in the move for the independence of Arakan. But the Mog community of Arakan considered the Rohingas an obstacle in the Mog-dominated independence movement of Arakan. Especially the racists among the Mog community were fearful about the absolute majority of the Rohingya population in the strategic areas of Mongdu-Buchidong on the Bengali-Burmese border.

The Mog leadership considered the strategic location of Mongdu-Buchidong extremely favorable for carrying out an armed rebellion. The area is very important militarily to direct an armed rebellion against Burma or Bangladesh in case of necessity. Needless to say, the Mog community dreamed of an independent and large Arakan including Chittagong.

On the other hand, the plan of the military government of Burma to uproot the Rohingas is directed from a different angle.

The Union of Burma is a multiracial country. Different races have different languages, traditions, and religious faiths. The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), under the leadership of General Aung San, formed an interim government in 1945 after the British recaptured Burma by defeating the Japanese. At the same time, following the Indian example, the AFPFL demanded the independence of entire Burma from the British. But many races and subraces like Karen, Shan, Sin, Kachin, Moon, Kaya, La-U, etc., did not agree to independence with the Burmese. Rather, they demanded separate independence for themselves. In the round-table conference in London in 1946, the British Prime Minister Mr. Attlee advised Gen. Aung San either to place the demand for independence by taking the support from all other races, or, negotiate about the independence only for the Burmese majority in Burma. Hence, on 1 February 1947, Aung San called a historic conference of all the races in Burma in the city of Panlong. After many controversies and debates, the charter of the independent Union of Burma was signed on 12 February 1947, on the basis of the following principles. (A) If the independence of Burma is achieved under the federal government of the Union of Burma for the whole of Burma representing all the different races, the process of achieving independence for races like Shan, Kachin, Sin, etc., would be faster. (B) The unity of the Burmese Union would mean "unity in the diversity." The federal government of the Burmese Union will make certain to protect the fundamental rights of the languages, religions, and cultural integrity of all the races. (C) After 10 years from the date of independence, if the federal government of the Union lost the confidence of the people, the Shan and Kaya races would get the right to become independent separately.

Burma achieved independence on 4 January 1948. A few months before on 19 July 1947, seven top-ranking leaders of the AFPFL including Gen. Aung San were assassinated during a sudden attack while they were attending a party meeting. After that U Nu took the oath as the first prime minister of independent Burma. During the next period, at one point, U Nu handed over government power to General

Ne Win for an interim period on the plea of stabilizing the law-and-order situation. In 1960, Gen. Ne Win returned to his barracks after returning power over to U Nu.

After returning to power, Prime Minister U Nu developed some good sense. After the independence of the Union of Burma on 4 January 1948, the Rohingas submitted a white paper to the Burmese Government about the mass killing of the Rohingas at Arakan by the armed Mog community that took place in 1942 and demanded rehabilitation for the hundreds of thousands of Rohingas. The Burmese Government, instead of paying attention to the demands, discharged the Rohingas from all the government jobs. The armed Mogs suddenly attacked almost 400 Rohingya-populated areas in many townships including May-Bu, Minbia, Pyakoth, Mohong, Kyakoth, Rachidong, Punyajuye, Buchidong, etc.

As a reaction against the utter indifference and negligence of the Burmese Government to their causes since independence and especially against the tortures of the Mogs, the Rohingas rose in armed rebellion and were able to establish their control over northern Arakan. After returning to power in 1960, U Nu paid attention to the affairs of the Rohingas. He expressed regret for the wrong actions taken against the Rohingas, which happened due to misunderstandings. By establishing the Mayu Frontier Administration, he transferred the administration of northern Arakan from Mog-controlled Arakan to the control of the central government. He promised to safeguard all the civic rights of the Rohingas. A separate radio program was introduced on Rangoon radio for the Rohingas. In the context of the personal appeals and requests of U Nu, the Rohingya rebels surrendered their arms to the Burmese Government on 4 July 1961. The Vice Chief of Staff of the Burmese Army Brigadier Angji welcomed the surrendering Rohingya rebels on behalf of the government. Due to the realistic and sincere efforts of U Nu, all the different races agreed to negotiate with the government to find a solution to the problem of keeping the federal Union government intact. At such an important time for Burma, Gen. Ne Win ousted the democratic government of U Nu and took power through a military coup. After taking over on 2 March 1962, Gen. Ne Win began to warn people about the mass-scale infiltration of outsiders from East Pakistan (currently Bangladesh). The Rohingas were declared outsiders, Rohingya organizations were closed, and the broadcast of the Rohingya program from Rangoon radio was stopped. He called on all other races to forget their problems for the time being and to cooperate with the army to drive out the outsiders from Burma. Since then, military operations, one after another, were executed to drive out the Rohingas only to satisfy the false vanity of the military junta. The Bo-Thin-Kyaw operation occurred in 1959-60. Two operations—Shwe Kye and Kaigan—were carried out in 1966. The Ngasinka operation happened in 1967-68. The Mayat Mon and the Bo-Hmo-Aung-Thau operations were carried out in 1969-70 and 1973, respectively. In 1978, the Nagamin or Dragon operation began. The plan for another operation—Galoon—was undertaken later. The only objective of all

these operations was to uproot the Rohingas from Arakan. Thus hundreds of thousands of Rohingas, driven from their own land, are living in different countries as refugees.

At present, about 1 million Rohingas are still living in Arakan. They live mainly in the Mongdu-Buchidong area in the Bangladeshi-Burmese border. Now, the military junta of Burma has employed all its power to drive out the Rohingas from the Mongdu-Buchidong area and to establish a Mog settlement over there. If it really happens, the Bangladeshi-Burmese border will become unprotected. It can easily be imagined how dangerous an entente among the Mogs of Arakan and the "Shanti Bahini" of the hilly Chittagong could be.

Rohingas Face Persecution, Torture

92AS0643B Dhaka SANGBAD in Bengali 5 Feb 92 p 4

[Article by N. M. Habibullah: "The Rohingya Tale of Concealed Persecution"]

[Text] History says that the Mogs and the Burmese are two separate races. The Mogs looked down on the Burmese as "Auchha" or a lower race. The Mogs claim themselves a more developed and civilized race than the Burmese. Historians unanimously agreed that although the Burmese King Vodapaya occupied Arakan in 1784 by taking advantage of the internal conflicts of Arakan, the Burmese learned about civilization and culture from the Arakanis. After occupying Arakan, the Burmese were introduced to the coin system and a developed judicial administration. In the article "Arakan's Place in the Civilization of the Bay," written jointly by the Arakani researcher Sun-Suye-Boo and the renowned historian M.S. Collis, the authors wrote, "She (Arakan) had nothing to gain, for the Burmese had nothing to teach a country (Arakan), which for centuries had been in touch with the world of thought and action through the Muslim sultanates at a time when Burma herself was isolated and backward." It means that the Arakanis had nothing to learn from the Burmese even after being occupied by Burma; rather, the Burmese learnt from them the concept of a developed civilization. In short, the Arakanis were a more advanced race than the Burmese.

No doubt, there is a historical basis for considering the Burmese a backward race. On the other hand, the Burmese people say that if you come in front of a cobra and a Mog at the same time, you must kill the Mog first. Because the Mogs are not only venomous, they are ferocious, too. For a basis behind this saying, the Burmese refer to the Mog pirates of the 15th century. In the later half of the 14th century Portuguese pirates reached the waterfront of Arakan-Chittagong. After the fall of independent Bengal to the Mughol power of Delhi, Jebuk Shah, the 12th king of the Mauk-U dynasty of Arakan, declared Arakan's full independence in 1530. To resist a probable Mughol attack, Jebuk Shah built a powerful navy with the Mogs of Arakan, taking help from the Portuguese pirates. As a result, the Mogs also became pirates following in the footsteps of the Portuguese. The contemporary historians wrote many incidents about the brutality of the Mog pirates. Menrikh, the Portuguese traveler of the 15th century, wrote that Mog

pirates entered the interior part of Bengal through the mouth of the Meghna River. Suddenly, they encircled a particular locality and gathered all the working people, irrespective of sex, in a particular place. Then they made a hole in the palm of each one with a red-hot iron and a cane was inserted through the hole. In this way they secured the prisoners and took them to the deck of the ship. As grains are thrown to chickens, rice grains were thrown to the prisoners. Thus the prisoners were taken to Arakan and employed in agriculture.

Remembering the brutality of the Mog pirates of the 15th century, the Burmese described the Mogs as venomous and ferocious. On the other hand, in the Karen race, many stories were told about the brutality and ferociousness of Burmese soldiers. As the Bengali mothers put their children asleep telling the fearful stories about the Borge robbers, the Karen mothers did the same thing to their children by telling the fearful stories about the Burmese soldiers.

However, after the capture of Arakan by the Burmese King Vodapaya in 1784, a longlasting bloody conflict began between the Mogs and the Burmese soldiers. The Mog rebels used the guerrilla technique of warfare from their bases in the jungle area of Arakan-Chittagong border and caused panic among the Burmese soldiers. The first Anglo-Burmese war began from this Mog-Burmese conflict. In a later period, the independence and nationalist movement of the Mogs was diluted into the greater Burmese movement following the currents and cross-currents of different events of history. And behind this, there was also the history of an ill-motivated conspiracy.

In the latter half of British rule, the British introduced the principle of "divide and rule" to administer the colonies. As a result, the Mog-Muslim conflict began in Arakan and the Burmese-Indian conflict began in Burma. As the majority of the Indians living in Rangoon and Mandalay were Muslims, the Burmese-Indian conflict gradually turned to a conflict between the Burmese and the Muslims. The British Government fueled the flame from behind the scenes. As a result, in the first phase of the Burmese nationalist movement, anti-India and anti-Muslim feelings played a very important role. At that time, a nationalist movement began in Arakan following the example of the Indian National Congress. The Mog nationalists considered the Muslims a great obstacle in their path to independence. The Burmese nationalists stimulated this feeling of the Mogs.

There was a total confusion and disorder in the British Army after the tremendous Japanese bombing on Akiyab in March 1942. The Burmese soldiers, employed by the British army, got separated and started to move toward their own country. When the British left Arakan in the face of a Japanese attack, an administrative vacuum was created over there. Taking the advantage of this situation, the nationalist Mog racist group captured arms from the fleeing Burmese soldiers. It should be mentioned here that at that time, the members of the "Thakin" party, the nationalist organization of Burma, took the side of the Japanese against the British. Some nationalist leaders of

the Mog community, following the example of the members of the Thakin party, also took part in the advancement of the Japanese army. The so-called nationalist Mog racists of Arakan considered the Japanese advancement a symbol of good luck. After capturing arms from the retreating Burmese soldiers, the racist Mogs suddenly and without any provocation attacked the Muslim village of "Letma," situated on the western bank of the river "Lem-bro." The Mog racists engaged in a brutal massacre after setting fire to the houses. Inspired by this and tempted to loot, the other Mogs also joined the armed Mogs with sticks, arrows, and other handmade weapons and began to destroy village after village. As a result of this most brutal killing of human history, almost 400 Rohingya villages became fully deserted. Almost 500,000 Rohingas became refugees. When all these Rohingya refugees reached the Muslim majority place of Mongdu traveling through the dangerous "Apak" pass, it created a tremendous communal excitement among the Rohingas against the local Mogs. But due to the sincere efforts of the Rohingya leaders, the Mog community remained unharmed. Many Mog nationalist leaders of Arakan by risking their lives carried on sincere but fruitless efforts to stop the brutal killings executed by the Mog community. Many conscious Mog leaders considered this killing a game played by the Burmese nationalists. These intellectual Mog leaders claimed that a powerful and advanced independent Arakan was born out of the strong entente among the Mogs and the Rohingas in the past. It is the strong belief of the Arakani leaders that the Burmese nationalists, in order to destroy the probable independence movement of the Arakanis, provoked some Mogs and thereby in an indirect way started this killing.

Since the independence of Burma in 1948, the U Nu government in its attempts to consolidate Burmese nationalism created a communal feeling in Arakan and tried to blend the Arakanis into Burmese nationalism by separating them from their independent identity. As a reaction to the ill-motivated activities of the Burmese central government, the Rohingas started an armed rebellion following the footsteps of the Karen and the Shan races. In order to suppress the rebellion, the Burmese Government used the Mogs against the Rohingas. The Burma Territorial Force was formed consisting of Mogs and that force was sent to suppress the Rohingya rebellion. The administrative machinery of Arakan was filled with communal Mogs. As a result of the torturous and highhanded treatment of the Mogs, the Rohingas appealed to the central government to take over the administration of northern Arakan directly under the central administration. In the next phase, the military junta used the Mogs in the operation to forcibly drive out the Rohingas from Burma. At the same time, attempts were being made to subdue the nationalist and patriotic Mog power of Arakan by these communal Mogs. Today, this Mog community suffers equally with the Rohingas.

History says that the independent Arakan was created from the strong entente among the Mogs and the Rohingas. On the question of maintaining self-respect and self-right in Arakan, the Mogs and the Rohingas are in the same

boat. Now, on the eve of this destruction of Arakan, the Mog-Rohinga entente is absolutely essential.

Divorce Rate Said Rapidly Increasing

92AS0642B Dhaka BANGLAR BANI in Bengali
4 Feb 92 p 4

[Editorial: "Divorce Is a Social Problem"]

[Text] The problem of divorce is assuming a complicated shape within the major social problems of the country. The number of divorces are increasing daily. But actually, there is no true estimate of the number. The incidents of divorce, which come to the attention of the government, are those of the cases of registered marriages. But all of the incidents of divorce of registered marriages are not reported to any government offices. In response to a question in the Sansad (Parliament), the minister in charge of the Social Welfare Ministry gave an estimate of the number of divorces had been reported to various government agencies. Recently one of the members of the Sansad from the Awami League party wanted to know from the minister the number of the divorced women in the country. In answer to the question, the minister reported that the number of divorced women in the country at present is 524,000. In this regard the minister provided the Sansad with additional and relevant information. The minister stated that there is no system to keep the statistics on helpless, divorced women. The government does not have a definite program of rehabilitation for this kind of woman. But in the "Center for Support of Women," run by the Ministry of Women Affairs, there is an arrangement to provide food and shelter to battered, divorced, guardianless, and helpless women for three months and also to provide them with some professional training. Besides, through the "Cell for Prevention of Oppression to Women" under the same ministry, there is an arrangement to provide legal assistance to battered, divorced, and helpless women.

The number of divorced women stated by the social welfare minister is not the whole picture in the country. A large number of marriages take place in the country without proper registration. The government officials and offices do not know about them. Through this kind of marriage without registration, thousands of men and women start to live family lives. But before a year, they get separated. In the majority of cases, the girls, being pregnant, are forced to live on the streets. There are thousands of incidents of these kinds of marriages and divorces in the slums and floating areas of the country. The government does not know the number for this kind of incident and, in fact, there is no adequate source for learning about them. In addition, in the remote village areas, thousands of marriages and divorces take place without registration. The strength to prevent these kinds of incidents rests more on political and social organizations than the government agencies. Above all, if the socially conscious people of the society unite and come forward, the number of marriages without registration and those of divorces would, no doubt, decrease. Moreover, the government offices relating to marriage are not above corruption. If this corruption is not stopped, the number of divorces cannot be decreased.

This problem will never be solved as long as there is a right to divorce and to practice polygamy. For this reason, the government has to make some regulations by which the tendency of divorce and the practice of polygamy could decrease. At the same time, the most important matter is taking steps to spread education in order to develop the consciousness of the people. There is no permanent solution for this kind of problem unless the growth rate of education among the common people is achieved. A divorce or a change of wife by people who live in the upper level of society does not have a negative influence on common people in society or create any

social crisis. But the government and the socially conscious people have to think more deeply about the problem created in the society by divorced women belonging to the ordinary, poor, and helpless class. They have to come forward and stand by the side of these distressed women. The government has to take steps, if necessary by amending laws, so that the man has to come to court and face the laws for divorce. And by this, the tendency of divorce may decrease. At the same time, all of the political parties, social organizations, serving institutions, and the socially conscious people must unite and come forward unitedly to achieve this goal.

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